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Contents

September 2019

FEATURES

34 Player biography
Luka Jovic

64 Club profile
Lyon women

THE WORLD THIS MONTH

People in the news...on and off the pitch

4 **In pictures**
10 **From the Editor**
12 **On the radar**
13 **Paul Gardner** VAR not an option
14 **Keir Radnedge** FIFA's disgrace
16 **Ins & outs** people on the move
18 **Brian Glanville** back to basics

EYEWITNESS

20 **Argentina**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

24 **Breakout stars**
40 **Rookie coaches**
46 **Team by team**
54 **Group stage draw**

EUROPA LEAGUE

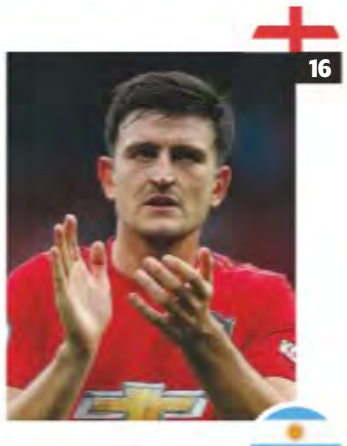
56 **Ones to watch**
60 **Group stage draw**

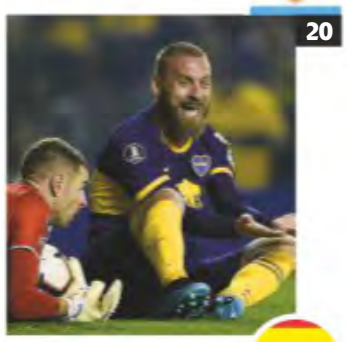
WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

62 **Real Madrid make their move**

THE RIVALS

82 **Hamburg & St Pauli**





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71 **Cook Islands** Nations League hopes
72 **Asia** Juventus tour wins few friends
74 **Africa** CAS rules in favour of Esperance
76 **Libertadores Cup** round-up

PLUS 70 Global diary 78 Results, tables, fixtures 80 Squads

In Pictures

The global game caught on camera

HOLLAND...Edson Alvarez scores Ajax's first goal in their Champions League play-off game with APOEL

PANAMA...Independiente's Francisco Vence (left) clashes with Alan Da Costa of Robinhood in a CONCACAF League game

SPAIN...Granada defenders German (left) and Domingos Duarte challenge Sevilla's Luuk De Jong

GERMANY...Bayern Munich celebrates Robert Lewandowski's goal against Schalke

RUSSIA...a Krasnodar fan at the Champions League play-off game against Olympiakos

MEXICO...Francisco Cordova celebrates his goal for America in a game with Tigres

JAPAN...Shonan Bellmare's Masahito Onoda tackles Rony of Athletico Paranaense

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FROM THE EDITOR

The Champions League dominates our coverage this month. In every aspect of football – technically, tactically, financially – it is the world game's most sophisticated competition. The great moments in the careers of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo have taken place against the backdrop of the Champions League. Virgil Van Dijk's masterful performances for Liverpool have seen him recognised by UEFA as Europe's best player – the first of several possible individual awards for him over the coming months.

The autumn is also likely to see renewed efforts to restrict access to the Champions League to a select band of wealthy clubs. There is a dangerous assumption in football that money equates to progress. With regard to possible changes, it is worth remembering that a "super league" already exists with the current Champions League format. I suspect we may still be debating possible changes for many years to come.

> There is a dangerous assumption in football that money equates to progress

This season's winner is unlikely to come from outside the cabal of rich super clubs, but the competition will feature a number of first-time managers and plenty of youngsters keen to make their mark. Hence our features on Breakout Stars (page 24) and Rookie Coaches (page 40).

Gavin Hamilton, Editor

10 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THIS MONTH

1 Van Dijk voted Europe's player of the season p10
2 River Plate and Boca to face each other again in Libertadores p76
3 VAR controversy in Premier League p13
4 Diego Forlan announces retirement p17
5 Maguire is world's most expensive defender p16
6 Esperance confirmed as African club champions p74
7 De Rossi makes Boca Juniors debut p20
8 Juventus under fire for South Korea friendly p72
9 Champions League draw p54
10 Europa League draw p60

UEFA

Van Dijk voted Europe's best player

Virgil Van Dijk of Liverpool became the first defender to win UEFA's player of the season award for his performances in his club's Champions League victory.

The Dutchman received his prize at a ceremony in Monaco after finishing ahead of previous winners Lionel Messi of Barcelona and Cristiano Ronaldo of Juventus.

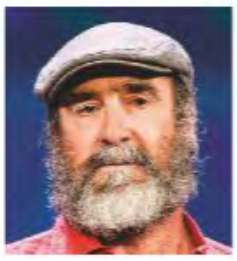
The award was decided by a jury comprised of the 80 coaches of the clubs that participated in the group stage of the 2018-19 Champions League and Europa League, along with 55 journalists, one from each of UEFA's member associations. Gavin Hamilton of *World Soccer* was the English jury member.

Van Dijk was also voted UEFA's defender of the year. His team-mate Alisson, who finished

Best...Lucy Bronze

"Only accidents, crimes, wars will still kill us. But, unfortunately, crimes, wars will multiply. I love football. Thank you"

Eric Cantona confuses his Monaco audience after quoting Shakespeare's King Lear during an acceptance speech for a UEFA award



Award...Virgil Van Dijk (second left)

fourth in the overall player vote, was selected as the beat goalkeeper, with Frenkie De Jong of Ajax (now Barcelona) chosen as the best midfielder and Messi the best forward.

England and Lyon defender Lucy Bronze won the UEFA Women's player of the year award, ahead of Lyon team-mates Ada Hegerberg and Amandine Henry.

Eric Cantona received a special President's Award from UEFA boss Aleksander Ceferin.

HOW THEY FINISHED

1 Virgil Van Dijk (Liverpool & Holland)
2 Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)
3 Cristiano Ronaldo (Juventus & Portugal)
4 Alisson (Liverpool & Brazil)s
5 Sadio Mane (Liverpool & Senegal)
6 Mohamed Salah (Liverpool & Egypt)
7 Eden Hazard (Chelsea/Real Madrid & Belgium)
8 Matthijs De Ligt (Ajax/Juventus & Holland)
8 Frenkie De Jong (Ajax/Barcelona & Holland)
10 Raheem Sterling (Manchester City & England)

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2010-11 Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)
2011-12 Andres Iniesta (Barcelona & Spain)
2012-13 Franck Ribery (Bayern & France)
2013-14 Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid & Portugal)
2014-15 Lionel Messi (Barcelona & Argentina)
2015-16 Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid & Portugal)
2016-17 Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid & Portugal)
2017-18 Luka Modric (Real Madrid & Croatia)

HEROES & VILLAINS

Hot shot...Josef Martinez

JOSEF MARTINEZ

The Venezuelan became the first player to score in 10 MLS games in a row, getting both goals as Atlanta United beat New York City 2-1.

ROBERT LEWANDOWSKI

The Bayern Munich striker becomes the first player to score in the opening round of games for five consecutive Bundesliga seasons.

CHOI KANG-HEE

The South Korean coach's Shanghai Shenhua defeated Rafa Benitez's Dalian Yifang 3-2 away from home in the Chinese FA cup semi-final. Choi was dismissed by Dalian in mid season.

Revenge... Choi Kang-hee

ELKESON

The Brazlian-born striker became the all-time leading scorer in the Chinese Super League with his 103rd goal as top-of-the-table Guangzhou Evergrande won 3-1 at second-place Beijing Guoan.

Disgraced...Schalke chairman Clemens Toennies

CLEMENS TOENNIES

The businessman stepped down as Schalke chairman after allegedly making racist comments about Africans.

SAMSON SIASIA

The former Nigeria coach was banned for life for allegedly receiving bribes.

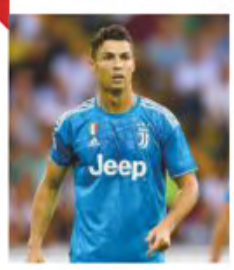
AD NERVION

The Spanish lower-league club faced criticism after youth-team players from English Championship club Queens Park Rangers were racially abused during a pre-season friendly.

ADIL RAMI

The 2018 World Cup-winner was sacked by Marseille after skipping training to take part in a TV reality show.

Reality...Adil Rami with Pamela Anderson



"Any player can go for €100million, even without showing anything"

Ronaldo questions the modern football transfer market

Eduardo CAMAVINGA

(Rennes)

There aren't many 16-year-olds who have got the better of Paris Saint-Germain, but the midfielder was the star of the show as Rennes upset the odds to beat the defending champions 2-1 on the second matchday of the new Ligue 1 season.

In only his third league start for the club, he ran the game and set up Romain Del Castillo for the winning goal. In doing so, he became the youngest player to provide an assist in the French top flight since such statistical analysis began.

Born in Angola in November 2002, he moved to France with his family as a child and a month after his 16th birthday he made history as the youngest player to sign a professional contract with Rennes.

After a debut as a substitute away at Angers in April 2019, he started a game for the first time in May, against Monaco. He thus became the first player born after 1 January 2002 to start a game in any of the top five European leagues.

HOUSSEM AOUAR
(Lyon)
The French under-21 shone in Lyon's 6-0 thrashing of Angers.

LAZAR RANDELOVIC
(Olympiakos)
Serb who scored twice on his European debut as the Greek club swept aside Krasnodar in the Champions League.

TAKEFUSA KUBO
(Mallorca)
Newly promoted Mallorca staged a major coup in taking the Japanese wonderkid on loan from Real Madrid for the season.

RAZVAN MARIN
(Ajax)
Highly rated midfielder snapped up from Standard Liege. Two-footed and sees passing lanes very early.

GEORGE TUCUDEAN
(CFR Cluj)
The Romanian striker's goal knocked Celtic out of the Champions League.

STRAHINJA PAVLOVIC
(Partizan Belgrade)
The teenage central defender was signed by Lazio in a €5.5m deal but loaned back to Partizan for the season.

Paul
GARDNER
WORLDWIDE VIEW

VAR should be a requirement, not an option

Sign of the times... VAR at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium

The powerful tool known as VAR is still a work in progress. And there is still a lot about it that stands in the way of outright acceptance. VAR relies on meticulous observation – and sometimes almost scientifically accurate measurement – yet its employment is not uniform. In fact, it looks almost haphazard.

VAR is, inarguably, a branch of refereeing as it is making refereeing decisions, and there is a FIFA rule book governing those decisions. The whole world plays according the same basic set of rules.

As VAR is such a costly programme, maybe 99 per cent of the football played worldwide does not use it and probably never will. But among the elite leagues and tournaments we find some that employ VAR and some that do not. There is no FIFA ruling that they have to use it and that allows a serious fluctuation in the level of refereeing in top-level matches.

Adding further confusion and variation, it is also evident that VAR users are free to decide for themselves which incidents in a game will be subject to VAR scrutiny.

The English Premier League has announced that it will not use VAR to detect goalkeeper movement. This is an absurd decision that undermines the very reason for using VAR; namely, that it can detect rule infringements that referees have trouble spotting.

It has been clear for years that the officials are unable to detect such movement and link it to the exact moment the ball is kicked. Inevitably, goalkeepers have been taking one step, maybe more, forward and are being allowed to do so. But rather than enforcing the rule, IFAB has caved in and relaxed it.

> The VAR calls involve millimetric measurements – a player's toe, maybe a nose, is offside

No change...VAR will not be used to detect goalkeeper movement at a penalty in the Premier League

Goalkeepers are now permitted to take one step forward, provided the other foot is on, or hovering over, the goal line. The likely result of that amendment is goalkeepers will now feel safe in taking two steps forward.

Even though football now has a means to infallibly detect goalkeeper movement through the use of VAR, the EPL has decided to ignore it and will continue to rely on the proven inaccuracy of on-field officials.

That the EPL is knowingly allowing keepers to cheat is bad enough – but there is more bad news. Perhaps the most irritating, and least acceptable, aspect of VAR is its use in deciding offside calls.

The VAR calls involve millimetric measurements – a player's toe, maybe a nose, is offside. The graphic proves it, so argument is out of the question. So why is a keeper is allowed to get away with illegal movement but an attacker is penalised for being offside by mere millimetres? Where is the common sense or the fairness in that?

Rules call for consistency, so VAR must be used to check on goalkeepers and offside calls or it should not be used for either. I would favour the latter solution.

We have grown used to football's mollycoddling of goalkeepers. One further sop is not going to make much difference. But this absurdity of calling a player's nose offside needs to be vetoed. VAR should only be reviewing offside calls that involve "clear and obvious error". A call that involves millimetric measurement cannot possibly fall into that category.

Maybe the best solution would be to rewrite the offside rule, taking a closer look at an idea that circulated some decades back that there has to be daylight between an attacker and the defender before an offside call can be made. WS

Keir RADNEDGE

THE INSIDER

FIFA's disgrace has been decades in the making

Stanley Rous is remembered popularly within the game as the traditional, archetypal English football official: an outstanding referee and FA general-secretary, then a naively well-meaning FIFA president overthrown by a streetwise pragmatist. Mere history? Not at all. Rous was one of the architects of FIFA's present dysfunctional governing system.

Over the past decade, world football's parent body has tumbled into disgrace through its inability to control the confederations.

CONMEBOL and CONCACAF were ravaged by money-grabbing crooks, while Oceania voted itself two corrupt, successive presidents. Asia's bank accounts were commandeered by its own supremo and the chaotically muddled African confederation has recently had to call in FIFA to run the show and negotiate its TV deals.

It was FIFA's first non-European president, Brazilian Joao Havelange, who injected a bacillus of greed that years later saw the most senior officials still awarding each other breathtaking pay and pensions.

The confederations, however, are not members of FIFA, despite populating the FIFA Council and providing the decision-making men and women while receiving a minimum $12million each in annual hand-outs.

FIFA has no disciplinary power over the confederations. The best it can do is kick individual officials out of the game for whatever corrupt acts emerge. But it is always far too late, as by then the miscreants have retired comfortably on their ill-gotten gains. This is a nonsense which Gianni Infantino – a member of the reform commission, remember – needs to address urgently.

So how did it come to this? Easy – through a botched reform back in the early 1950s. Those were the days before the easy money of sponsor and TV gold, a time when a top job in the world game meant personal prestige rather than bulging offshore bank accounts.

Back then, FIFA was a Eurocentric organisation. For instance, the Congress at the 1950 World Cup in Rio de Janeiro was the first staged outside Europe. True, South America had possessed its own confederation since 1916 but that had been created out of necessity in a different era of travel and communication.

> In the early 1950s, a top job in the world game meant personal prestige rather than bulging offshore bank accounts

In Rio, ageing French president Jules Rimet and his Belgian vice-president Rodolphe Seeldrayers paid lip service to the concept of FIFA expansion. But they had no idea what that really meant.

For them, Africa and Asia represented a mere handful of football-backward minnows. They did not foresee the imminent wind of change which gave independence to dozens of new nations and changed the balance of football power along the way.

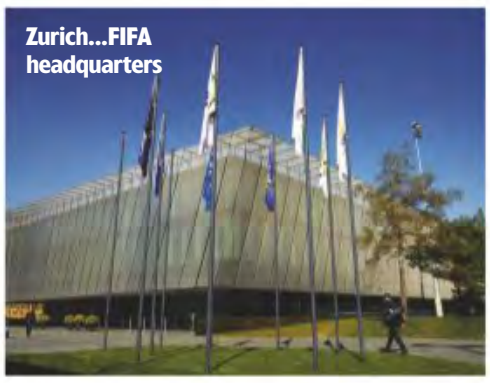
FIFA boss... Gianni Infantino

But there were three men who did possess greater vision. One was Rous, another was Italian federation general-secretary Ottorino Barassi and the third was the Swiss federation president Ernst Thommen.

Rous was the most respected for bringing the British home nations back into FIFA, for securing them a FIFA vice-presidency and for resolving FIFA's post-war financial problems with the proceeds from a representative match. Thommen, meanwhile, was the man behind the highly successful Swiss football pools organisation and had the ear of Rimet and Seeldrayers.

It was Thommen who brought in his associate Kurt Gassmann as general-secretary after the retirement of worn-down Ivo Schricker in 1951. It was Thommen who brought in Hans Bangerter – who would later become UEFA general-secretary – as assistant. And it was Thommen who led the successful search for a new FIFA HQ overlooking Zurich.

Rous, Barassi and Thommen recognised the need for a new structure. Indeed, they and Europe's nations began discussing it around FIFA Congress at the 1952 Winter Olympics in Helsinki. They accepted


Zurich...FIFA headquarters

that Europe needed its own federation because several African and Asian FAs had started pressing for their continents' access to the executive committee.

Initially opposed, Thommen soon saw sense but that original caution would cost him dear. Along with Rous and Barassi, the trio devised the Industrial Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, now the Europa League. But although they had the right idea, they had the wrong format – as *L'Equipe* demonstrated with the creation of the original European Champions Cup.

FIFA set up a commission to study the structural effect of expansion. An extraordinary Congress in 1953 led to agreement for African and Asia representatives to join the ExCo. A decade later they each gained a vice-presidency too.

By now Europe's FAs had created UEFA, and FIFA had agreed a majority presence for its delegates on the world body's ExCo.

That same representational right was granted in due course to the other confederation blocks. Suddenly, without noticing, FIFA had permitted its own power to be usurped – and presidential elections proved the point.

Rimet, honoured but no longer heeded, retired in 1954. Seeldrayers stepped up but died in office. The same fate attended England's Arthur Drewry, who died in 1961, after which Thommen stepped up as interim president of FIFA.

He was the main man at the time and was also president of FIFA's World Cup organising committee. As such, he had overseen the selection of Chile, rather than Argentina, as 1962 host. Thommen therefore expected to be confirmed as FIFA president. But African and Asian voters, remembering his opposition to their rise, backed Rous instead.

Ironically, African and Asian votes later wrought Rous' 1974 overthrow by Havelange – Rous paying the price with his presidency for supporting apartheid South Africa on one continent and the beleaguered Chinese nationalist Taiwan on the other.

Previously, Thommen and Rous had flung open the FIFA door to the confederations without preconditions. The two men paid the price in the loss of personal power.

As for FIFA, the failure to enshrine executive power over the confederations has proved politically and reputationally catastrophic. WS

TALKING QATAR BLUES

The 2022 World Cup finals in Qatar are just over three years away. Expect to see, in the next year or so, a steady stream of anti-Qatar stories in the international media. While some will make sense, many will make no sense at all unless the reader understands that a Saudi-financed anti-Qatar campaign is in full swing.

No one can argue that the Qatar staging is controversial. This is partly because of the identity of a football-minnow host, partly because of the workers' conditions issue, and partly because of the bidding procedure and award in December 2010.

Saudi Arabia and political allies such as the United Arab Emirates have a specific anti-Qatar agenda led by the imposition of an economic, travel and broadcasting rights blockade back in 2017. So far it has failed and Qatar has refused to bend. So the Saudis are stepping up the fake news campaign.

What better, more visible target than the World Cup?

Under construction... Lusail National Stadium

WINNERS

MANCHESTER CITY

By winning the Community Shield, Pep Guardiola's side became the first English team to win four domestic trophies in a calendar year.

DANNY LENNON

The 50-year-old Clyde manager was a sub for the Glasgow Cup game with Celtic Colts due to an injury crisis and came on in the second half as his side won 3-1.

BORUSSIA DORTMUND

Jadon Sancho scored one goal and made another as Dortmund beat Bayern Munich 2-0 to win the German Super Cup.

LOSERS

MARTIN LASARTE

Despite leading the team to the Egyptian league title, the coach was sacked by Al Ahly after they lost to Pyramids FC in the cup.

ISTANBUL BASEKSAHIR

The Turkish club's first Champions League campaign ended prematurely following a 3-0 aggregate defeat by Olympiakos in the qualifiers.

PAOK

The Greek champions lost 5-4 on aggregate to Ajax in the Champions League qualifying round.

"Ajax has a very clear way of playing football. Barca, Juve and Atletico have it too. Real Madrid does not. Their football is based on the talent in their squad. Their style is decided by their wallet"

Atletico coach Diego Simeone criticises his Madrid rivals

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

IN

Next...Thomas Doll

EUROPE

Cypriot champions APOEL, who have averaged a new coach every six months for the last four years, replaced Paolo Tramezzani with **THOMAS DOLL**, who left Hanover at the end of last season.

CONCACAF

Previously director of football at Dutch club Groningen, **RON JANS** was named coach of MLS side Cincinnati. Dismissed by Houston Dynamo, **WILMER CABRERA** replaced Remi Garde at Montreal Impact, while **ROBIN FRASER** took charge of Colorado Rapids.

AFRICA

VAHID HALILHODZIC quit Nantes two weeks before the start of the new Ligue 1 season to coach Morocco.

MLS job... Ron Jans

Serbian coach **MILUTIN SREDOJEVIC** took charge of Egypt's Zamalek after leaving South African side Orlando Pirates.

Choice...Vahid Halilhodzic

LUIS GONCALVES took charge of Mozambique, Lesotho appointed **THABO SENONG**, while **FRANCIS KIMANZI** replaced Sebastien Migne as boss of Kenya. **JOEY ANTIPAS** was named caretaker of Zimbabwe until the end of the year and Liberia employed Englishman **PETER BUTLER**. Botswana and Tunisia appointed **ADEL AMROUCHE** and **MONDHER KEBAIER** respectively.

OCEANIA

DANNY HAY replaced Fritz Schmid, becoming only the second player to both captain and coach New Zealand.

OUT

Disappointing... Hernan Dario Gomez

Maguire becomes world's most expensive defender

England centre-back **HARRY MAGUIRE** joined Manchester United from Leicester City for £80million to set a new world record fee for a defender.

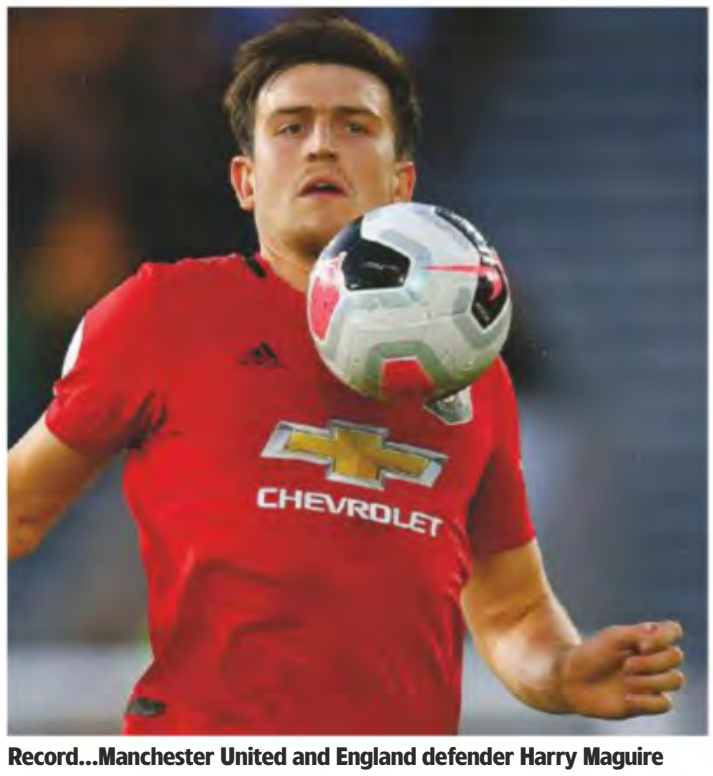
Manchester United's **ROMELU LUKAKU** moved to Internazionale for €80m and became the third-most expensive signing of all time in Serie A.

Arsenal made **NICOLAS PEPE** their record signing, paying Lille £72m for the Ivorian winger. Zenit paid a joint-record Russian fee of €40m to sign Barcelona winger **MALCOM**.

Monaco signed a trio of strikers in **ISLAM SLIMANI** (Leicester City, loan), **WISSAM BEN YEDDER** (Sevilla) and **HENRY ONYEKURU** (Everton). Portugal international **RENATO SANCHES** moved to Lille from Bayern Munich.

Bayern signed season-long loan deals for **PHILIPPE COUTINHO** (Barcelona) and **IVAN PERISIC** (Internazionale).

In Italy, Fiorentina signed **FRANCK RIBERY**, **MARIO BALOTELLI** joined Brescia and **HIRVING LOZANO** moved from PSV to Napoli.



Record...Manchester United and England defender Harry Maguire

"I still can't believe it because you were always a bull"

Diego Maradona expresses his shock at the death of former team-mate Jose Luis Brown

Appointments, sackings and loans

EUROPE

Former Real Madrid and Internazionale midfielder **WESLEY SNEIJDER**, who made a record 134 appearances for Holland and played in the 2010 World Cup Final, announced his retirement as a player.

The most decorated player in FA Cup history, having lifted the trophy seven times, **ASHLEY COLE** – who also won 107 caps for England and was a Champions League winner in 2012 – retired aged 38.

Decorated...Ashley Cole

Dynamo Kiev fired coach **ALEXANDER KHATSKEVICH** after elimination from the Champions League.

Former Nigeria international defender and Chelsea sporting director **MICHAEL EMENALO** left a similar role with Monaco by mutual consent.

SOUTH AMERICA

Colombian coach **HERNAN DARIO GOMEZ**, who took Ecuador to their first World Cup, in 2002, was sacked after a disappointing second spell in charge following the side's failure to make the knockout stage of the Copa America.

EDUARDO VILLEGAS left his position as coach of Bolivia after a poor showing at the Copa America.

CONCACAF

WAYNE ROONEY will leave DC United when the MLS season ends and join Championship side Derby County as a player-coach.

Real Salt Lake sacked coach **MIKE PETKE** after he had been suspended and fined for using unacceptable and offensive language during a game.

AFRICA

STUART BAXTER resigned as coach of South Africa, while **FLORENT IBENGE** quit as boss of DR Congo and **SRDJAN VASILJEVIC** parted company with Angola.

Al Ahly sacked coach **MARTIN LASARTE** despite winning this year's Egyptian Premier League title.

Forlan calls it a day

Former Manchester United and Atletico Madrid striker **DIEGO FORLAN**, who was capped 112 times by Uruguay and last played for Kitchee in Hong Kong in 2018, announced his retirement at the age of 40.

Forlan left Independiente for Manchester United in 2002 and went on to play successfully in Spain for Villarreal and Atletico Madrid, winning the 2010 Europa League and twice claiming the ESM Golden Shoe award as Europe's top goalscorer.

He also had spells in Italy (Internazionale), Brazil (Internacional), Japan and India, as well as with boyhood club Penarol, with whom he won the 2015-16 Uruguayan championship.

With Uruguay, he won the 2011 Copa America and was one of the stars as they reached the semi-finals of the 2010 World Cup.

Retired... Diego Forlan

OBITUARIES

World Cup... Walter Martinez

Walter MARTINEZ (1982-2019)
The striker won 49 caps for Honduras, scoring 12 goals, and played in the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. As well as his homeland, he also played club football in China, Spain, USA, Guatemala and El Salvador before retiring in 2016.

Jose Luis BROWN (1956-2019)
Central defender who was on the pitch for every minute of Argentina's success at the 1986 World Cup, scoring the opening goal as they beat Germany 3-2 in the Final. After playing club football in Argentina, Colombia, France and Spain, he was technical assistant as his country won gold at the 2008 Olympics.

Final...Jose Luis Brown scores against Germany

Junior AGOGO (1979-2019)
A national hero when Ghana hosted the Africa Cup of Nations, scoring the winner in the quarter-finals against Nigeria.

Rene TAELMAN (1945-2019)
Former Belgian sports journalist who took charge of the national teams of Burkina Faso and Benin.

Peter Bonu JOHNSON (1963-2019)
Coached Gambia to victory over Brazil at the Under-17 World Cup in 2005 with a side later exposed as overage.

Hero...Junior Agogo

Dickson MAKWAZA (1942-2019)
The captain of the Zambia team that lost in the Final of the 1974 Africa Cup of Nations to neighbours Zaire.

Humphrey MIJNALS (1930-2019)
The first player of Surinamese extraction to play for Holland. Elected Surinamese footballer of the century in 1999.

Brian GLANVILLE

THE VOICE OF FOOTBALL

Bruce's bonus after going back to basics

Ah, the glorious uncertainty of football; part of its immense and endless charm, so often the source of frustration.

This season was still very young when we saw abundant evidence of all this. Not least at Tottenham Hotspur, where Spurs against all expectation found themselves beaten by a Newcastle United side which had lost its first two matches and had deserved to.

The Sunday which would see Newcastle rise from seeming disaster, tightening in defence with five at the back, a newspaper had criticised their manager Steve Bruce for an allegedly too open and attacking policy. "Go back to basics defensively," it urged, accusing Bruce, not welcomed by the fans though locally born as a successor to the much appreciated Rafa Benitez, of adopting too open a style.

Elegant... Joelinton (in orange)

Criticised... Steve Bruce

Whether Bruce read and followed this advice, who knows. The fact is that at Tottenham his team was aligned with five men at the back and produced only a sporadic counter-attack, one of which produced the decisive goal.

The goal, when it came, was the result of an elaborate and impressive move. Christian Atsu's pass cut out no fewer than three defenders, enabling the £40million striker Joelinton to control the ball elegantly, thus finding the space to shoot inside the keeper Hugo Lloris' near post.

Spurs had already been given warning when the home keeper had tipped a drive by Sean Longstaff over the bar. It is one of the oldest unwritten rules of football that when a team doesn't score after dominating the play it will be in danger from a sudden breakaway.

And Tottenham? Was Mauricio Pochettino, their manager, wise to keep Christian Eriksen, his salient playmaker, on the bench for so much of the game? Yes, the playmaker wanted to get away, but in the meantime leaving him out for so long was surely Pochettino cutting off his nose to spite his face.

"We can't justify our performance, we should play better," admitted the Spurs boss after the defeat. "Eighty per cent of possession is too much in the Premier League for so few shots on target.

"You need to create a very good dynamic and a strong team bond at the moment. That situation in our group is still far, far away in that respect."

No rescue came this time from VAR, which Pochettino had eulogised in the previous game when Spurs uneasily prevailed to draw with Manchester City.

Should Spurs have had a penalty when Harry Kane seemed to have been fouled in the box not just once but twice in succession? Pochettino wisely did not labour the point.

> "Eighty per cent of possession is too much in the Premier League for so few shots on target"
>
> Mauricio Pochettino

The mystery of David Luiz

Some transfers make minimal sense, not least that of David Luiz, the veteran Brazilian international bought from Chelsea presumably to settle Arsenal's defence with his experience.

But sheer lack of pace has found him floundering as, embarrassingly, he failed recently to keep up with Liverpool's Mo Salah. He conceded an embarrassing penalty when clutching the attacker's shirt, then later allowed the quicksilver Egyptian to speed past him to score.

"We have to look forward," said the hapless defender. Quite why Gunners' coach Unai Emery even wanted him at all must remain a mystery. Experience can be invaluable, but not if it is nullified by sheer lack of pace.

> Some transfers make minimal sense, not least that of David Luiz from Chelsea

Too quick...Liverpool's Mo Salah (left) and David Luiz of Arsenal

Lampard giving youngsters their fling at Chelsea

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good and the transfer ban placed on Chelsea already looks as if it could be a blessing in disguise. This is a club notorious for acquiring talented young players who far too seldom get a first-team chance.

But now Frank Lampard finds himself obliged to give younger players their fling, with pleasing results.

Tammy Abraham and Mason Mount were well known to Lampard from his time playing at Chelsea and they began this season with encouraging brio.

Last season Mount impressed on loan at Derby County and Lampard says he is not surprised the player has hit the ground running "because I've got real belief in him, but it has made me sit up and take more notice of when he can get to in the game".

There is also the highly promising Callum Hudson-Odoi, the teenaged right-winger who impressed when given his chance last season and should soon be recovering from the injury which had sidelined him for some while.

Abraham, meanwhile, has won the approval of Mateo Kovacic, the veteran Croatian who came to Stamford Bridge from Real Madrid.

As a central midfielder, Kovacic is given general licence in central midfield where his passing is impressive and he can break up opposing attacks.

Lampard says he gives him more freedom and the player, who speaks five languages and is nicknamed "The Professor", says: "I can come and take the ball and go forward."

Blues...Mason Mount (left) and Tammy Abraham

Maddison deserves his England chance

Impressive... James Maddison

James Maddison, now 22, has been making strong claims for a place in England's midfield. Having made his mark with Norwich City, he moved on to Leicester City where his form has been consistently impressive. His passing shines from long distance with the outside of his right foot, he plays with ebullient confidence and he would surely show it were he picked regularly.

There's still life in Hodgson... and Cahill

Now 72 years old, Roy Hodgson shows no sign of faltering in charge of a Crystal Palace team which he shrewdly enables to punch above its apparent weight.

So it emphatically was at Manchester United, where he became the first Palace manager to beat United in the league at Old Trafford since 1989. And you had to go back to May 1991 to find Palace's last victory in the league versus United.

Victory came after an uneasy start to the season which resulted in a draw and a defeat as Palace failed to score in their first two games.

But this is a team notably capable of beating supposedly elite opponents and away from home they remain formidable. At the Etihad last season they were the only team to beat Manchester City.

One of the veterans in a resilient team at Old Trafford was Gary Cahill, who had come from Chelsea after a humiliating season in which the Italian manager Maurizio Sarri had cast him wholly out of first-team favour.

Now 33, Cahill was more than up for his defensive task at Old Trafford. Hodgson had used him regularly when manager of England.

Read Brian Glanville's weekly online column at worldsoccer.com

eye witness

Joel Richards reports from Buenos Aires

ARGENTINA

All roads lead De Rossi to Boca

At the 2013 Confederations Cup in Brazil, an Argentinian journalist was making small talk with several members of the Italy squad ahead of TV interviews. He was trying to coax players into drawing an imaginary stripe across his chest, a gesture in Argentina to show when one is a River Plate supporter. "No, no," said Daniele De Rossi. "I support Boca."

Six years on, with over 600 games for Roma to his name and nearing the end of a career that includes a World Cup winner's medal, De Rossi is indulging a life-long ambition. After rejecting lucrative offers to play in MLS or China, and from other clubs in Italy, he signed a one-year deal with Boca Juniors.

"Why not come to Boca?" he said in his first interview with the club website shortly after arriving in Buenos Aires. "The passion at this club has moved me since I was young."

His passion for the game and fascination for Boca are the only explanations behind De Rossi's switch because there are many reasons why no major European players – let alone World Cup winners – dare make the move that he has.

The standard in the Argentinian league is low, even if De Rossi has said all the right things about the quality he has seen since arriving. Argentinian clubs cannot offer a fraction of the wages that even neighbours Brazil can, let alone clubs in the Middle East or China. And, as De

CARLOS
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Rossi himself said, from afar Argentina looks a dangerous place.

Yet few clubs boast the mystique, tradition and lure of Boca; from the intoxicating matchday atmosphere at the world-famous Bombonera, to the illustrious roll call of past players such as Diego Maradona. Shortly after arriving in Argentina, De Rossi ticked off another fan's dream when meeting with his idol Maradona. But as some questioned his fitness and what he could bring to the team, the Italian stressed that he is at Boca to play and compete.

"I can't promise we can win a cup but I do promise to give 100 per cent because I only play one way," De Rossi told fans of a club founded by Italian immigrants – their nickname, *Xeneize*, means Genovese – and where the ethos and demand is that of commitment over style.

De Rossi joining Boca is an extraordinary and unique case of a European star moving to Argentina.

French World Cup-winning striker David Trezeguet joined River Plate in 2012, he too fulfilling a life-long ambition to play for a club he supported as a youngster. Trezeguet arrived at El Monumental with the club at its lowest ebb, in the second tier after relegation, and his goals aided a return to the top flight. But Trezeguet grew up in Argentina and had friends and family in the country. So too did Mauro Camoranesi, De Rossi's team-mate from Italy's 2006 World Cup-winning side who ended his career back home with Racing and Lanus.

Argentinian clubs and their supporters long for "their" players to return home – Newell's Old Boys hold out for Lionel Messi, Independiente for Sergio Aguero – but De Rossi's move to Boca is as eccentric as it is bold.

Behind the transfer was Nicolas Burdisso, former team-mate of De Rossi at Roma and now Boca's sporting director, who engineered a year-long contract that includes escape clauses should De Rossi choose to return to Italy to start a coaching course.

"I'm not going to be here for 10 years, my career is coming to an end, but it is a challenge that I wanted to take on," De Rossi told TyC Sports.

The Italian's debut for Boca in the Argentinian Cup offered several clues as to what can be expected from his time at the club. Even at the age of 36 he was still way ahead of the pack in quality, bringing much more to the heart of midfield than just industry. He scored Boca's only goal of the game and also picked up a yellow card.

Yet while the cameras focused on De Rossi, Boca failed to dispatch second division side Almagro and crashed out of the competition on penalties.

The pressure at the club is intense and Boca are in desperate need of turning the page after last year's traumatic defeat in the Libertadores Cup Final to arch-rivals River Plate.

Boca supporters will be hoping that De Rossi can influence results on the pitch immediately, as September sees the league *superclasico* at the Monumental.

However, far more crucially, the following month offers up a mouth-watering clash between River and Boca, over two legs, in the semi-finals of the Libertadores Cup. WS

Welcome...Boca fans show their appreciation of De Rossi's decision to join the club

Dream...De Rossi (far left) runs out at the Bombonera

Competitive...in the thick of the action

> "I'm not going to be here for 10 years, my career is coming to an end, but it is a challenge that I wanted to take on"
>
> **Daniele De Rossi**

Tim Vickery reports

Big names head to Brazil

Daniele De Rossi is not the only big name heading to South America. Brazil's captain Dani Alves, chosen as the outstanding player at the recent Copa America, is back from Europe after more than a decade-and-a-half to join Sao Paulo – and with him went the Spanish full-back Juanfran. Another full-back pair, the Brazilians Rafinha and current international left-back Filipe Luis, have both crossed the Atlantic to sign for Flamengo of Rio.

All of these players could have stayed on in Europe. There were also options such as China or maybe the Middle East and the United States. Instead they have chosen to continue their careers in South American club football.

In the case of the Brazilians this is perhaps not surprising as it is common for players to go back home at the veteran stage. More newsworthy, perhaps, is the arrival of the Europeans. True, Clarence Seedorf enjoyed a late career adventure with Botafogo, though the fact that he has a Brazilian wife was clearly an important factor in the move.

Joy...Dani Alves celebrates scoring for his new side

The choices taken by De Rossi and Juanfran are interesting because they can be seen as a consequence of a new trend in the South American game. There is not more money sloshing around, nor are there any dramatic signs of an increase in quality. But that does not mean there is no dynamic of change.

A fascinating recent development is the growing space given to ex-players in directorial positions, though South America is still running well behind Europe in this regard.

A few years ago there were negotiations to take Nicolas Anelka to Atletico Mineiro of Brazil. Anelka commented afterwards that the deal broke down because of the amateur way in which things were conducted. The Brazilian directors were, he felt, playing to the gallery. The deal was announced to the press before negotiations had been completed, and the club only sent him one air ticket when he had also requested one for his agent. Anelka was interested but ended up repelled by a lack of trust in the club.

Things were very different in the case of De Rossi because the contact was made through former Roma team-mate and currently Boca director Nico Burdisso. Sao Paulo's directors include former captains of Brazil and Uruguay, Rai and Diego Lugano, both of whom are said to have played a role in persuading Alves and Juanfran to join.

Alves made a dream return to Brazilian football, scoring the only goal in the game as Sao Paulo won a league game against Ceara. In their next game they did even better, travelling to Athletico Paranaense, who are notoriously strong at home, to record another 1-0 win.

A few months ago, in turmoil on the field and off it, Sao Paulo were even seen as relegation candidates. Now the entire mood has changed, with the club playing themselves into the pack who are in contention for the title – and the signing of Alves has given the place a huge lift.

> The choices taken by De Rossi and Juanfran are a consequence of a new trend in the South American game

Although Brazil's captain grew up towards the other end of a giant country, Sao Paulo is the team he followed as a boy and it is the destination that he chose. He also remains Brazil's right-back and has designs on holding his place until the next World Cup.

But he has not featured there for Sao Paulo – not least because they have also acquired Juanfran. Alves has been given a free role in midfield, able to construct from deep, orchestrate in the final third and burst into the opposing penalty area. He even played much of his third game, away to Vasco da Gama, at centre forward after team-mate striker Raniel was controversially sent off. WS

Interesting...Spanish full-back Juanfran opted to join Sao Paulo rather than stay in Europe

Breaking through

Nick Bidwell selects 50 players who are set to break through in this season's Champions League

Brahim Diaz
(Real Madrid)

Much to the annoyance of Pep Guardiola, the teenager opted to quit Manchester City in January for a six-and-a-half-year contract with Real. Bernabeu coach Zinedine Zidane says: "I like it that he always goes straight for goal and is absolutely two-footed."

Ademola Lookman
(RB Leipzig)

A loanee with Leipzig in the second half of the 2017-18 season, the speedy English winger put pen to paper in July on a five-year contract. It should prove a fruitful alliance as his old club, Everton, never seemed to particularly trust him, while RB most certainly do.

Thiago Mendes
(Lyon)

Bought this summer for €22m from Lille, the Brazilian midfield holder is much more than a tenacious ball winner. Technically accomplished, astute in his distribution, very aware tactically and an authoritative leader, the 27-year-old is the complete package.

Raul De Tomas
(Benfica)

Benfica did far more than gather crumbs from the rich man's table when paying Real Madrid €20m in July for their unappreciated striker. Pay no attention to the fact that RDT's senior career with the *Galacticos* lasted only 14 minutes, a "blink and you'll miss it" substitute cameo in a Copa del Rey tie against Cornella in October 2014. Drill down beneath the "Real reject" tag and you will find a fine second striker, someone who only requires trust to blossom.

Fans at the Estadio da Luz certainly liked what they saw of him in Benfica's 5-0 hammering of Lisbon rivals Sporting in the Portuguese Super Cup. Although he was not on the scoresheet, the 24-year-old looked as sharp as a tack, catching the eye with his clever movement and evident chemistry with front-line partner Haris Seferovic.

Ostensibly recruited to fill the void left by the departure this summer of Joao Felix, who moved to Atletico Madrid for an eye-watering €125m, De Tomas is no like-for-like replacement but could, in his own way, prove equally potent. He plays with guile, is magnetically attracted to the red zone and can shoot with either foot.

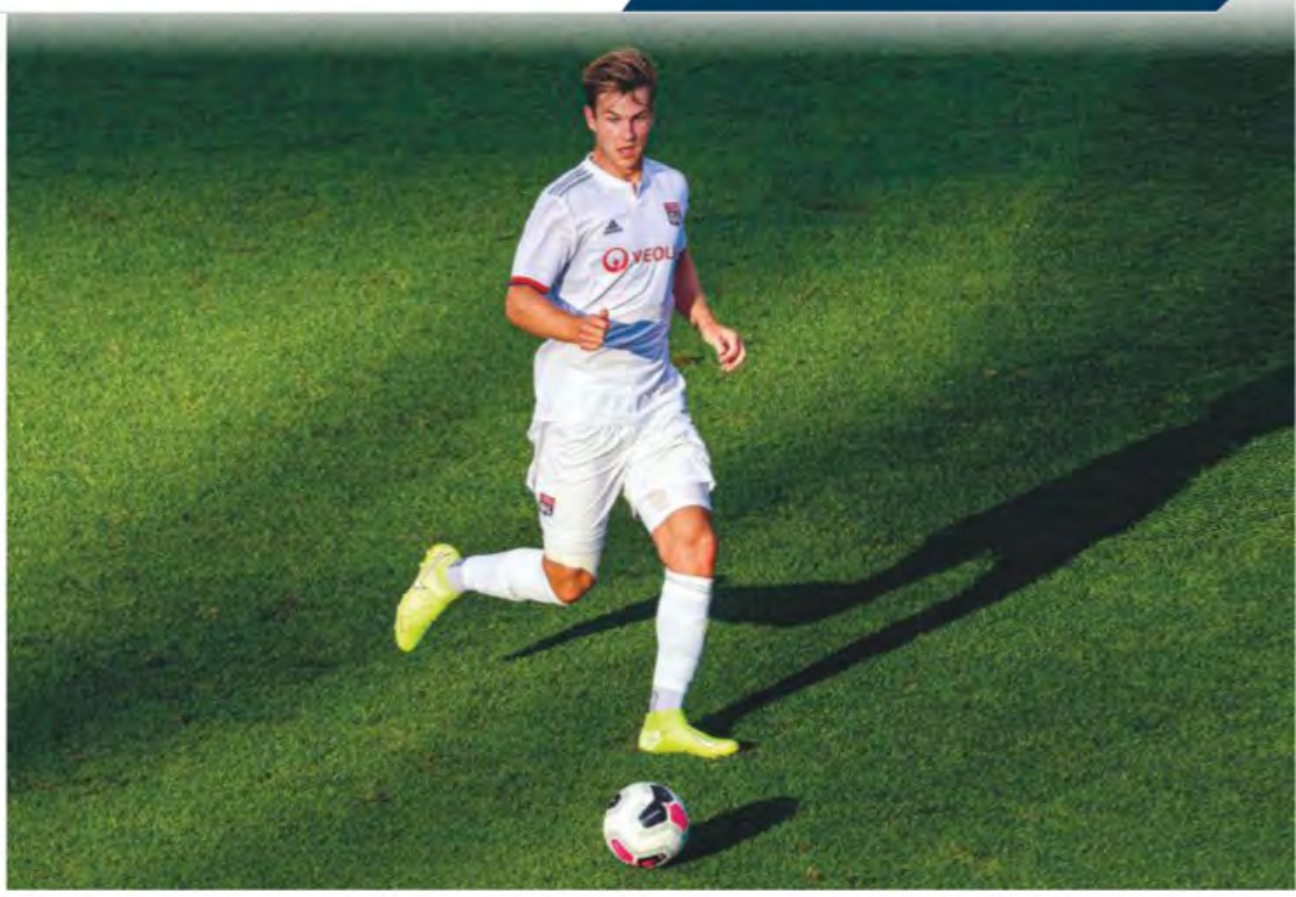
The Madrid-born son of a Spanish father and Dominican mother, Real's first team was strictly off limits and he was sent out on loan for the last four years, first at Cordoba, then Valladolid and for the last two seasons with Rayo Vallecano.

Murilo Cerqueira
(Lokomotiv Moscow)

Brazilian central defender signed from Cruzeiro who, at first glance, seems a little ponderous, but is a highly effective forward-shadower all the same. Performed excellently for Brazil's under-23s at this summer's Toulon tournament in the south of France.

Erling Haland
(Red Bull Salzburg)

The Norwegian put nine goals past Honduras at this summer's Under-20 World Cup, setting a new tournament record. The son of former Manchester City midfielder Alf-Inge, he moved to Austria in January from Molde.



Joachim Andersen
(Lyon)

Long before the end of last season, it was common knowledge that OL were looking at fresh centre-back options. With the Brazilian Marcelo frequently making errors, the warning signs simply could not be ignored, thus prompting club president Jean-Michel Aulas to splash out a club record €30m, including bonuses, on Sampdoria's up-and-coming Danish rock.

Aulas, by instinct a cautious pragmatist, does not make a habit of largesse in the transfer market. But he was happy to make an exception in the case of the 23-year-old. And no wonder Aulas and director of sport Juninho looked so pleased to welcome the Dane aboard.

Tall and well built, he is powerful in the air and makes up for a perceived lack of pace with an excellent reading of the game and flair for timely interventions. The OL top brass also love his maturity and leadership qualities, and quite rightly believe that a central defensive duo of Andersen and the Belgian international Jason Denayer has all the bases covered.

Once an pupil at the much-respected Midtjylland academy, he has clearly given a lot of thought to his career development path, keen to soak up a specific football education at each of his foreign postings during his time in Holland with Twente, Sampdoria in Italy and now with Lyon in the Champions League.

> Powerful in the air, he makes up for a perceived lack of pace with an excellent reading of the game

Junior Firpo
(Barcelona)

Jordi Alba beware. After many years as Barca's first-choice left-back, Alba now faces stiff competition for his place from the recently arrived ex-Real Betis favourite. Born in the Dominican Republic, he helped the Spanish under-21s capture the European crown in June.

Jonathan Ikone
(Lille)

Now that star front-runner Nicolas Pepe has flown the Lille nest for Arsenal, the onus will be on the French under-21 international to take up the attacking slack at the Ligue 1 runners-up. Can play out wide but is much more effective through the middle.

Michael Cuisance
(Bayern Munich)

Bayern's signing of the French under-20 midfielder went under the radar amid all the hullabaloo and excitement generated by the successful swoop for Barcelona ace Philippe Coutinho. The 20-year-old, however, was a class act for Borussia Monchengladbach.

Benjamin Pavard
(Bayern Munich)

Bayern's €35million summer purchase from Stuttgart is a rarity in the Allianz-Arena pro ranks: someone for whom the group phase of the Champions League is totally unchartered territory. Indeed, strangely for a World Cup winner who was a key figure in France's 2018 triumph, the 23-year-old defender has never featured in any European club competition.

Not that he should experience any teething problems on the continental stage. He already has 22 caps for *Les Bleus* and, as he proved at the World Cup, he knows all about competing for high stakes. Lining up at right-back in Russia, his performance levels were extraordinary and he also scored the goal of the tournament with a volley in the quarter-finals against Argentina.

After suffering relegation from the German top flight last term, he clearly felt the time was right for a career reboot.

"I've a great hunger to win titles: the Champions League and the Bundesliga," he declared in his first Bayern press conference. "Like my new club, I've very big goals. We are similar.

"Stuttgart's relegation still makes me sad. Maybe I should have left the club after the World Cup. At the time it made sense for me to stay for another year."

While it's often assumed that Bayern intend to primarily deploy Pavard in his preferred role as a centre-back, he is just as likely to emerge as the in-house utility man, alternating between stopper, full-back and defensive midfield briefs.

With Bayern's usual packed schedule, the graduate from the Lille academy should be worth his weight in gold.

> "I've a great hunger to win titles: the Champions League and the Bundesliga"

Ryan Sessegnon
(Tottenham Hotspur)

Once he tunes into the nuances of Mauricio Pochettino's system and style of play, the Spurs new boy should have a lot to offer. Able to play left-back, wing-back, as a winger and even on the right flank, the England under-21 international should be quite an addition.

Leonardo Balerdi
(Borussia Dortmund)

While the *Schwarz-Gelben* are far from short of central-defensive manpower – Mats Hummels, Manuel Akanji and Dan-Axel Zagadou – the 20-year-old Argentinian bought from Boca Juniors for €15m in January could still force his way into coach Lucien Favre's plans.

Mbaye Diagne
(Galatasaray)

The bustling Senegalese striker was in irresistible form in the Turkish top flight last term, scoring 20 goals for Kasimpasa in the first half of the campaign, then moving to Galatasaray, where he added 10 more. He was on Juventus' books some five years ago but failed to play a single minute.

Rodrygo
(Real Madrid)

Growing up in Sao Paulo state, the adolescent Rodrygo often used to tell his father, Eric, that one day he would play for Real Madrid. And that's exactly the way it's turned out for the teenage winger who arrived at the Bernabeu this summer in a €45million switch from Santos.

Normally the plan would be to give the 18-year-old time to acclimatise to the European game and protect him from undue pressure. But circumstances have changed. The tear-jerking fate of talented left-winger Marco Asensio – who blew out cruciate knee ligaments in pre-season – has opened up a major flank vacancy and the youngster may be the individual to fill it.

Widely regarded as the most exciting Brazilian prospect since Neymar emerged at Santos a decade ago, Rodrygo could be just the answer to Real's prayers. Not only does he boast an extraordinary range of attributes – mesmerising dribbling ability, speed, agility, goal threat and excellent powers of endurance – he is also made of the right mental stuff, never intimidated by the close attention of markers and remarkably free of hesitancy and complexes on the big stage.

The only possible spanner in the works could be non-EU player quotas. Real already have their allotted three – Brazilians Eder Militao and Vinicius Junior, and Uruguayan Fede Valverde – but they are hoping that Valverde's ongoing naturalisation application is completed post haste, thus giving a Champions League green light to the Brazilian boy wonder.

Good enough to be handed an equipment contract by Nike at the age of 11, Rodrygo Silva de Goes continues to be precocity writ large. Here's hoping Spanish state administrators offer him a timely helping hand.

Sepp Van den Berg
(Liverpool)

With one eye very much on the future, the Champions League holders have further augmented their centre-back pool with the acquisition of the PEC Zwolle stopper. So mature and composed on the ball for a 17-year-old.

Wilmar Barrios
(Zenit)

Workaholic Colombian defensive midfielder who left Argentinian side Boca Juniors for Russia early this year in a €15m deal. Quickly found his feet in his new European environment, combining boundless energy, grit and accurate passing. Very much at home in the "quarterback" role.

Takumi Minamino
(Red Bull Salzburg)

Jesse Marsch, the new Salzburg coach, makes no secret of his admiration for the Japanese attacker and believes he has found a better platform for the 24-year-old, switching him from a pure front-running role to a deeper spot, either as a wide attacking midfielder or a false nine.

Joao Felix
(Atletico Madrid)

The fourth-most expensive signing in history after *Atleti* coughed up €126m to lure him away from Benfica. The gifted second striker was the biggest revelation in all of Europe last season, yet was rejected by Porto a few years ago as they were worried about his lack of size.

Florentino Luis
(Benfica)

Rumoured to be on the radar of Manchester City, the 19-year-old defensive midfielder proved an overnight sensation after Bruno Lage switched him from the B team to the first XI for the last four months of what was to be golden Portuguese league campaign for Benfica.

Luka Jovic
(Real Madrid)

After bagging a hatful of goals for Eintracht Frankfurt last term, the Serb is only just beginning to realise the enormity of his next challenge: proving himself worthy of the €60m Real spent on him. He is a natural predator, but will he be happy with a bit-part role in Madrid?

Kai Havertz
(Bayer Leverkusen)

Heaping plaudits on the midfielder is something of a cottage industry in German football circles. While nobody has a bad word for Havertz, the general consensus of opinion is that the 20-year-old is heading straight to the top.

Former national skipper Lothar Matthaus predicts a world-beating future, while Hamburg coach Dieter Hecking calls him "Germany's next top star". Leverkusen managing director Rudi Voller is equally effusive in his praise, stating: "As a footballer, there's absolutely no limit to what he can achieve. It's quite clear that he's going to be the leading player in this country over the decade to come."

Scoring 11 goals in 17 games after the winter break, he invariably set the attacking tone for the *Rhinelander* last season. Going from a dismal ninth to a Champions League qualifying spot, Havertz was very much in the vanguard and during the run-in he proved the pathfinder supreme, netting opening goals in four of his side's last six fixtures. "He played unbelievably," gushed Leverkusen boss Peter Bosz.

Despite next to no Champions League experience – he has made just one start in the competition, a 4-2 home loss to Atletico Madrid in February 2017 – there is no reason why he should not swiftly find his elite bearings. Intelligent and level-headed, he seems to float above all the hype and has an extraordinary palette of attributes to paint with: ambidextrous ball control, speed off the mark, tactical awareness, guile, aerial ability and finishing power, as well as sound physical qualities.

It could well be that this is his last campaign with Leverkusen, so BayArena fans should enjoy him while they still can.

Maxi Gomez
(Valencia)

Hot to trot for Celta Vigo last term, the Uruguayan striker had more than one Premier League suitor this summer, but he instead chose the internal option, signing on the dotted line for Valencia. His release clause at the Mestalla? A whopping €140m.

Mason Mount
(Chelsea)

With Chelsea currently on a transfer ban they have had to turn to self-sufficiency – and could hand the playmaking keys to this classy academy graduate. He enjoyed a productive spell last season on loan at Derby County, who were managed by new Blues boss Frank Lampard.

Christopher Nkunku
(RB Leipzig)

Forced to offload players to keep financial fairplay watchdogs off their case, PSG's enforced fire sale saw RB make a successful €15m bid for the midfielder. Unlike in Ligue 1, where he was used sparingly, the French under-21 starlet will be considerably more active in the Bundesliga.

Pietro Beruatto
(Juventus)

New coach Maurizio Sarri took many observers by surprise by deploying the homegrown left-back in pre-season. Some might say it's a case of nepotism as Pietro's father, Paolo, is a youth-team trainer at Juve, but that is an unjust conclusion in every way.

18+

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Adil Aouchiche
(Paris Saint-Germain)

The 17-year-old midfielder is widely tipped to be on the cusp of his Ligue 1 debut. Started out as a number eight or in the holding role, but excelled last season as an advanced playmaker in the youth ranks. He was top scorer at this summer's Euro Under-17s with nine goals.

Manor Solomon
(Shakhtar Donetsk)

Turning defence into attack has long been page one of the Shakhtar manual in Europe and their diminutive Israeli winger has more than enough pace and skill to spring the trap. Happy on either flank, the 20-year-old joined the Ukrainian side at the turn of the year from Maccabi Petak Tikva.

Nicolo Barella
(Internazionale)

Little wonder Inter were so pleased to have won the auction for the Cagliari box-to-box midfielder. Wanted by a host of leading Serie A and Premier League sides, the 22-year-old is a fine engine-room all-rounder, someone who can win the ball, make the play and dynamically drive forward.

Elif Elmas
(Napoli)

Bought from Fenerbahce this summer for €19million including bonuses, the 19-year-old North Macedonian schemer of Turkish descent knows what it means to be coveted, being heavily linked in the close season with Manchester City, Manchester United, Tottenham, Atletico Madrid and Borussia Dortmund.

It always has been thus for the native of the Butel district of the North Macedonian capital, Skopje. At the tender age of 11, while impressing at the Rabotnicki academy, he reportedly had scouts from Barcelona and Espanyol in close attendance – as were Dutch club Heerenveen, who for a long time thought he would join them, only to be gazumped at the last minute by Fenerbahce in 2017 for a paltry €180,000.

The youngest-ever debutant for the senior Macedonia side – just 17 years and eight months old when brought on as a second-half sub in a World Cup qualifier against Spain – he can fit in anywhere in midfield or across the front line and plays with a pronounced work ethic allied to natural flair and imagination.

Former Macedonian striker Goran Pandev, who played for Napoli and was a Champions League winner with Internazionale in 2010, is convinced Elmas has what it takes to be a success.

"He's a very technical player with a strong personality," says Pandev. "He's young but already has considerable international experience."

No doubt Napoli boss Carlo Ancelotti will have much advice to impart – and the youngster is sure to listen closely as his decision to plump for the Serie A side was triggered by a phone call that he received from "Carletto".

> "He's a very technical player with a strong personality. He's young but already has considerable international experience"
> **Goran Pendev**

Zeki Celik
(Lille)

One of the most-improved players on the French circuit, the 22-year-old Turkish international right-back is the sort of pro every coach adores; a player who radiates consistency, reliability and energy, never goes off piste tactically and is quick to learn and adapt.

"He never makes the same mistake twice," says Lille boss Christophe Galtier. "He really surprised me with his feel for the game. He doesn't speak much but listens attentively and observes a lot. He's smart and he's ambitious."

Celik has come a long way in a short space of time. Prior to joining Lille a year ago from second-tier Istanbulspor, he had not played a single minute in the Turkish top flight and was signed as cover for Kevin Malcuit, whose departure for Napoli then left the door of opportunity wide open for the young Turk.

In a finely tuned Lille side which finished second to Paris Saint-Germain last season, Celik was one of the unsung heroes. While the front-line triumvirate of Nicolas Pepe, Jonathan Bamba and Jonathan Ikone monopolised the lion's share of the praise and headlines, Celik served as the unobtrusive counterpoint, the busy, athletic and precise grafter in the shadows.

Galtier's favoured 4-2-3-1 system very much depends on the full-backs shuttling back and forth, as vital for defensive guard duty as the creation of attacking overloads.

> "He never makes the same mistake twice"
> **Lille coach Christophe Galtier**

Located on the same flank as Pepe, Celik and the new Arsenal man linked well together last term and whenever Pepe moved inside Celik proved especially effective as the ersatz winger.

Full marks go to the French club's Portuguese recruitment chief Luis Campos who signed Celik for just €2.5million. He must now be worth four or five times that figure now.

Carles Perez
(Barcelona)

The tricky little Barca B winger piled up the first-team credits in his club's pre-season tour of Japan, notably scoring two fine goals against Vissel Kobe. Rapid, intelligent and a fighter, he was a key member of the *Blaugrana* side which won the UEFA Youth League in 2018.

Renan Lodi
(Atletico Madrid)

No doubt about it, *Atleti* picked up one of the bargains of the summer when paying Athletico Paranaense just €20m for the 21-year-old Brazilian left-back. A native of Sao Paulo state, he is a monster of an attacking full-back, able to pierce and destabilise on the inside or outside.

Rhian Brewster
(Liverpool)

One of the most exciting prospects to come out of the Liverpool academy in years, the Essex-born teen is poised to make a breakthrough this term. Goals are in the striker's blood and he was England's eight-goal trump card when triumphing at the 2017 World under-17 finals.

Ruslan Malinovskyi
(Atalanta)

Much praised for his educated left foot and fearsome shooting power, the Ukraine midfielder did not hang around long after Genk's Belgian title celebrations in May. Within weeks he had forced through a move to a fast-improving Atalanta side.

Moussa Diaby
(Bayer Leverkusen)

It did not take long for fans of the *Werkself* to fall in love with the freshly signed PSG winger. The French under-20 starlet is known for high-tempo work and his bullet-from-a-gun pace, explosive changes of direction and slick give-and-gos. One area he must work on is his finishing.

Ferro
(Benfica)

Impressive homegrown centre-back who early this year was still playing for the Eagles' reserve side. Parachuted into the first team in February when Jardel went down with a hamstring injury, he has not looked back since and played a key role in the club's domestic league triumph.

Valentino Lazaro
(Internazionale)

Despite welcoming a new investor on board this summer, Hertha Berlin simply could not say no when Inter came knocking at the door and offered €25m for the skilful 23-year-old Austrian winger, a record outgoing fee for a Hertha player.

Jann-Fiete Arp
(Bayern Munich)

Some pundits feel that the 19-year-old striker took the "too much, too soon" route when leaving second-tier Hamburg for Bayern. The counter-argument is the fact that he and first-choice line-leader Robert Lewandowski are the only genuine centre-forwards at the club.

Ianis Hagi
(Genk)

The son of Gheorghe Hagi, Romania's greatest player of all time, the 20-year-old patently has the same creative chromosomes. So impressive for his country's under-21s at this summer's European Championship, he has now swapped his homeland alma mater, Viitorul Constanta, for Belgian top dogs Genk.

There were plenty of raised eyebrows when the announcement filtered through in July that Hagi junior had moved in a transaction thought to be worth €8m. The fee seemed on the low side and many were perplexed that he had chosen the relatively cash-poor Belgian league over far weightier bids from England, Spain, Germany and Russia.

But his father, who is the owner and coach of Viitorul, insisted the decision was common sense, declaring: "Ianis is going to a very good team which has just won the Belgian title, is in the Champions League group phase and is a club which brings on young players.

"We had some big money proposals, some medium ones and a more normal offer for a good technical project. We chose the latter. He is delighted to come to Belgium.

"I hope Belgian football is going to make him a better player. It's an important step in his career."

No one can blame the Hagis for not wanting to run before they walk as Ianis has been burned once before, spending 18 frustrating months on the fringes at Fiorentina before heading back chastened to Viitorul.

Gheorghe Hagi was extremely unhappy with the way the *Viola* treated his offspring and clearly was in no mind to repeat the mistake. Forget the charms of overstocked elite clubs; Ianis will play week in and week out at Genk.

Mario Hermoso
(Atletico Madrid)

As an iron-clad rule, ever-combative *Atleti* coach Diego Simeone has no room in his squad for individuals who shirk a trial by fire – and that's the last accusation you could throw at the capital club's new centre-back, who arrived from Espanyol in mid-July for €25m.

The huge task of stepping into the shoes of long-serving Uruguayan stopper Diego Godin – who, after nine seasons plugging gaps in the *Rojiblanco* rearguard, moved to Internazionale this summer – would be enough to unnerve many a potential replacement.

Not, however, the 24-year-old, who genuinely appears to relish the challenge.

"I don't see Godin's legacy, the work he put in at Atletico, as a reason to be scared," he says. "I believe the opposite; that it gives you the motivation to carry on developing and improving."

Hermoso, capped three times by Spain at senior level and also able to operate as a left-back, settled in with ease during pre-season. A beast in the air, intense, switched on and especially astute in his use of the ball, he will add a much-needed touch of control and sophistication to Atletico's back-line build-up play.

> "No one can change his past. But what you can try to do is create a better future. All I want to do is to make history with Atletico"

A born and bred *Madrileno*, Hermoso came through the youth ranks at – whisper it gently – Real Madrid. He was on the Bernabeu books from the age of 10 and was playing for their reserve side as recently as the 2016-17 campaign. On loan the previous year at second-tier Valladolid, he inked a three-year deal with Espanyol in the 2017 close season.

"No one can change his past," he says. "But what you can try to do is create a better future. All I want to do is to make history with Atletico."

Ansu Fati
(Barcelona)

The second-youngest player ever to line up for Barca, the 16-year-old Bissau-Guinean winger made his debut in a 5-2 victory over Real Betis in August. "He can bring things to the team that we lack," says coach Ernesto Valverde. "He's cheeky, speedy and uses space well."

Mateo Garcia
(Red Star Belgrade)

The little Argentinian right-winger made an instant impact on signing for the Serb champions in August from Las Palmas, scoring his first goal in a play-off encounter against Young Boys. The 22-year-old enjoyed a productive loan spell in the Greek Superliga with Aris last term.

Miguel Angel Guerrero
(Olympiakos)

In-form Spanish striker who was highly influential in the qualifying campaign, scoring against Viktoria Plzen and Krasnodar. Bullish and combative, the 29-year-old used to play in his homeland for Albacete, Gijon and Leganes. Moved to Greece at the start of last season.

Josip Ilicic
(Atalanta)

At long last, someone has resolved the Ilicic riddle; the strange phenomenon of the gifted Slovenian who, for most of his professional career, has been the servant of two apparently irreconcilable masters: virtuosity and inconsistency.

When playing for Palermo and Fiorentina, the 31-year-old was either thrillingly influential, disinterested or an accident waiting to happen. So what a surprise to see him learn a raft of new tricks on arriving at Atalanta in 2017. All of a sudden he became a game-changer.

Last season, as Atalanta secured a first Champions League qualification, he was the man who made all the difference, scoring 12 Serie A goals, laying on seven more and constantly punctuating proceedings with his unusual passing angles and hypnotic dribbling.

It is incredible to think that early on in the campaign he was laid up in hospital with a bacterial infection of the lymph nodes and had to wait until late October to start his first league game. "Many times it crossed my mind that I might have to give up football," he recalls. "As a man, the illness changed me a great deal. I look at the world differently now."

Much of the credit for this most unexpected coming-of-age tales belongs to Atalanta coach Gian Piero Gasperini, who also worked with the player at Palermo. He accepts that Ilicic can be hard to handle – and not especially enthusiastic on the training ground – but he has managed to keep him engaged and up for the fight.

In a young and vibrant Atalanta team with a considerable amount of organisational structure, Ilicic is their all-important wild card, whether used as a second striker, wide on the right or as a number 10.

Lisandro Martinez
(Ajax)

The Amsterdammers sealed an excellent piece of business this summer when paying Defensa y Justicia just €7m for the Argentinian centre-back. Still only 21, he looks made for Ajax: cool, unhurried, a fine reader of the game and outstanding in his distribution.

Daniel Podence
(Olympiakos)

One of several players at leading Portuguese club Sporting who terminated their contracts last year after fans mounted a training-ground attack. The diminutive left-winger has quickly become a huge favourite at the Karaiskakis Stadium with his individual brilliance.

Bruno Petkovic
(Dinamo Zagreb)

Tall, imposing 24-year-old striker with an impressive all-round game. Dinamo's top scorer in qualification with four goals, he re-joined the club from Serie A Bologna nine months ago. Once a member of the Dinamo youth team, he had been on a loan merry-go-round in Italy.

Lukas Masopust
(Slavia Prague)

Intelligent and direct winger who makes a massive contribution with his ability to pop up in expected places. Normally plays wide right but can operate on the opposite flank or as a second striker. Joined Slavia from Jablonec mid-way though last season.

Percy Tau
(Club Brugge)

As he proved with a strong showing at this year's Africa Cup of Nations, the South African striker is unpredictable, single-minded and eminently spectacular. Left Mamelodi Sundowns for Premier League Brighton in the summer of 2018, only to be denied a UK work permit.

THE UNKNOWN GALACTICO

WORDS: Nick Bidwell

Serb striker was a €60m summer signing by Madrid

Real Madrid's new €60million striker is one of the most coveted young players in Europe and used to being the centre of attention. Powerful and potent, the 21-year-old Serb has been in demand for as long as he can remember.

With 27 goals in all competitions for Eintracht Frankfurt last season, Jovic was regarded as a football prodigy while still at infant school, swiftly becoming aware that the doors of advancement, which were closed to the majority of his peers, were unbolted and unguarded for him.

An ethnic Serb born and brought up in the Bosnian village of Batar, he was only seven when he received his first footballing job offer, invited to join Teretana Tas, a team in the Belgrade-based "Mini-Maksi", a development league for kids in the Serb capital. This would be a first taste of football meets business and an enlightening glimpse of the money to be made with a ball at his feet.

"We were offered a lot of financial help," recalled his father, Milan, in an interview with the Serb magazine *Mozzart Sport*. "Luka scored a hat-trick ▸

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in a trial game and afterwards I was told he would be paid €50 a match and we'd also have €20 a game in travel expenses. That's right, €50 in 2004. That was no small amount."

Just 12 months later he was snapped up by leading Belgrade club Red Star. His sponsor was the club's long-serving youth coach and talent-spotter Tomislav Milicevic, an iconic figure at Red Star for over three decades and the "discoverer" of a string of top performers, among them midfielders Vladimir Jugovic, Dejan Stankovic and Milan Jankovic, front-runners Marko Pantelic and Nikola Lazetic, and defender Dusan Basta.

Milicevic first came across the adolescent Jovic during a tournament in Bijeljina, a town close to the youngster's home. Milicevic says he only needed 10 minutes to fall under the Jovic spell and was heard to utter a pithy conclusion: "This is one dangerous player. He must come with us."

Milicevic later told the Serb tabloid *Novosti*: "What I immediately noticed about Luka was the positional sensibility he had for scoring goals. He had the same instinct for putting the ball in the net as old-time strikers like Gerd Muller [the legendary German marksman] and Slobodan Santrac [a prolific finisher with OFK Belgrade and Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 70s].

"He was a quiet boy, very modest. He already knew what he wanted from life – to be a footballer."

As a rabid supporter of Red Star, the youngster was in seventh heaven to wear the red-and-white stripes of his heroes. Yet he could quite easily have traced another early-years career path. Prior to pledging himself to Red Star, his father was talking with the other big Belgrade club, Partizan, whose ace in the hole was the wad of cash they were waving, some €200 a month.

Partizan, in full charm-offensive mode, thought they were almost home and dry when they arranged for Jovic to meet with Serb international striker and ex-Partizan favourite Savo Milosevic, who just happened to come from the same region of Bosnia as the boy and knew his family. Milosevic made his pitch but it was to no avail – Red Star was the only game in town.

Not that Milosevic – who these days is Partizan's coach – has ever borne a grudge. During a spell as Serbia's technical director for youth and under-21 teams, he developed a good working relationship with Jovic and has always sung the golden boy's praises, once stating: "I've never seen a striker like Jovic in my entire life. He puts all his chances away. He's great at selecting the best possible option in front of goal.

"He never fails to take the right course of action, whether it be right-foot, left-foot or head. He chooses the best. There

Restricted...his chances at Benfica (above) were limited

> "I've never seen a striker like Jovic in my entire life. He puts all his chances away...there isn't a player in the world right now who comes close to Jovic in this part of the game"
>
> Savo Milosevic

Red star...his early days in Belgrade

Timeline

DEC 11, 2013
Gets a hat-trick for Serbia under-17s in a 4-1 victory over Croatia under-17s.

MAY 28, 2014
Scores on his Red Star debut, less than three minutes after appearing as a sub against Vojvodina.

JUL 28, 2014
Part of the Serbia squad that reaches the semi-finals of the Euro Under-19 Championship.

OCT 18, 2014
At 16 years, nine months and 25 days, becomes the youngest player to appear in the "Eternal derby" against Partizan.

MAR 20, 2016
Makes his Benfica debut, as a sub, in a 1-0 win away at Boavista.

JUN 27, 2018
Joins Eintracht Frankfurt on a two-season loan.

isn't a player in the world right now who comes close to Jovic in this part of the game.

"He was born to score goals, to be a number nine. When I was with the Serb federation I used to talk to Luka and suggested to him that he become more involved in build-up play. I say that because he really is a good footballer. Technically he is very strong, but you only get to see it when he is scoring goals.

"Last season, with Eintracht, he did contribute more on the constructive side of things. I think he could do a little more in this area. Not just goals."

Jovic was certainly a hit when playing for Serbia at junior level and 44 goals in 59 games, from under-16 up to under-21 level, speak for themselves. Now a full international, he is the standard-bearer of his Serb generation.

When asked about the secrets of his success, Jovic told the *Frankfurter Rundschau* newspaper: "I think God gave me this talent and this flair for goalscoring. I've always had this in me. Naturally, I've played a lot of football and trained a great deal, but I'm not sure you can learn what to do.

"In the box, I don't think a lot about where I should run. I would have to say it's a matter of instinct."

Lethal...he scored five goals in a game against Dusseldorf last season

The highlight reel of his two years at Frankfurt features the sort of excerpts an Olympian gymnast would be proud of. Take his flying back-heel winner in a German Cup semi-final against Schalke. Or the body-contorting mid-air volley which he arrowed into the Fortuna Dusseldorf net last autumn, the first instalment of an incredible five-goal haul.

But that's not to say that his path to the Bernabeu has only been based on his rare combination of intuition and laser-like finishing. He has had plenty of help along the way, particularly benefitting from the guidance of his father, who was a tough taskmaster even when Luka was a toddler.

Milan Jovic's first commandment was two-footed prowess and he made sure that his son constantly worked on his weaker left foot. The result is an ambidextrous assassin.

Without the enthusiasm and selflessness of his dad, there would probably be no Luka the *galactico*.

Nothing was going to stand in the way of a father's ambition for his offspring and he very much kept the ball rolling during Luka's early years with Red Star, serving as his son's taxi driver on repeated 270km round trips between Batar and Belgrade. The family's mode of transport, an old VW, was literally run into the ground, and on occasion the vehicle would double up as a bed for the night.

"One time, Luka had two games to play at the end of the week and we couldn't return home to Batar," Milan Jovic explained to *Mozzart Sport* in 2013. "So I parked outside the stadium and put pillows and blankets in the back of the car. I even smoked to keep the temperature up."

Rather peculiarly, the story of Luka's Red Star apprenticeship was a mixed bag; part symphony, part tuneless din. Usually playing or competing with youngsters two or three years older than him, he often was sensational, regularly scoring 30 goals or more in a season. The problem was that he could also irritate.

He had a reputation for going through the motions on the training pitch and was a nutritionist's nightmare, his dietary intake essentially comprising of sweets, crisps and doughnuts. Red Star officials were so concerned with his "refuelling" ways that they encouraged team-mates to sweep his room for undesirable treats.

He would make his pro debut for Red Star in a 3-3 draw at Vojvodina on the final day of the 2013-14 season, coming off the bench to score a late point-saving equaliser and at 16 years, five months and five days his reward was a chapter in Red Star history, taking over from Dejan Stankovic as the club's youngest-ever top-flight marksman. And there is no chance of him ever forgetting that breakthrough moment as every pair of boots he wears has the date of that exploit embossed on them.

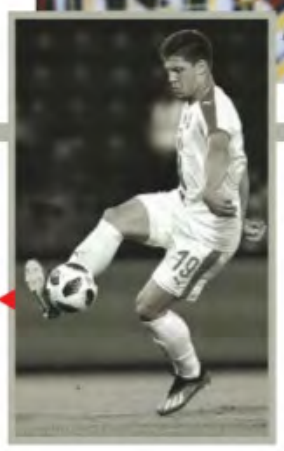
The following season, the boy wonder

Spotlight...playing for Serbia under-17s

APR 18, 2018
Scores the only goal of the game as Eintracht beat Schalke in the German Cup semi-finals.

MAY 19, 2018
Is an unused sub as Eintracht Frankfurt beat Bayern Munich in the German Cup Final.

JUN 4, 2018
Wins his first senior cap, appearing as a sub for Serbia in a friendly against Chile.



JUN 27, 2018
Appears as a sub against Brazil in the World Cup.

was anointed Red Star's first-choice striker and handed the number nine jersey which used to belong to Djordje Despotovic. It was a case of horses for courses according to Red Star director Zvezdan Terzic, who remembers: "I told Despotovic that he was a good player but that even if Robin Van Persie signed here, the nine would still go to Jovic. He is going to explode this season. He is going to be the Serbian Radamel Falcao."

World-class hyperbole maybe, but it did undoubtedly heap unnecessary pressure on the teenager, who over the next 18 months, only accumulated 11 domestic league goals for Red Star. During his formative years, he frequently cited Falcao as a role model and, with the benefit of hindsight, he admits such talk made his task more complicated. "Being likened to Falcao was not good for me." he explains. "Everyone was assuming that I'd score three in every game. Expectations soared, it was too much."

To add to the problems caused by hype, he also found himself the subject of criminal intentions. In November 2015 his parents received a blackmail letter, threatening to break Jovic's legs if they were not paid a substantial sum.

"Your son will only be able to play in a wheelchair," read the anonymous missive. Fortunately, the extortionists were soon brought to book.

By early 2016, Red Star were ready to cash in. With the Belgrade club in dire need of money, selling Jovic represented the ideal economic fix and a deal was struck with Portuguese giants Benfica. Jovic says he cried for three days on leaving the Marakana, Red Star's iconic home ground, but in truth the tears flowed for far longer. In a season-and-a-half at the Estadio da Luz he did not begin a match in the Portuguese top flight, only making the odd appearance as a sub, and he did not score once.

His story at Benfica was one of mutual misunderstanding. Neither the club nor the young Serb could find any common ground whatsoever. Jovic felt disrespected almost from the off, adamant that he deserved more than a place on the Benfica B roster. The club, for their part, were appalled by his waywardness, lack of application in training and nocturnal excesses. When pencilled in for a rare first-team start, he contrived to throw it away and was, kicked off the squad after being caught in a nightclub on the eve of the match.

Word has it that Benfica coach Rui Vitoria finally gave up on him following a bizarre incident in the autumn of 2016. Decidedly short of front-line options after his three main strikers – Raul Jimenez, Kostas Mitroglou and Jonas – all fell victim to injury, Vitoria had hoped to take up the slack by selecting Jovic for a league game. Then the annoying newsflash: Jovic had damaged his foot while playing in his swimming pool and was likely to be out for four to five weeks. The point of no return had been reached.

These were tough times for Jovic. He was alone in a foreign land, barely had a handle on the Portuguese language and for the first time in his life he was not a pecking-order untouchable. He ended up all at sea, but to his credit he does not make excuses. "It was my fault," he recalls. "I didn't behave so professionally. I have to acknowledge that."

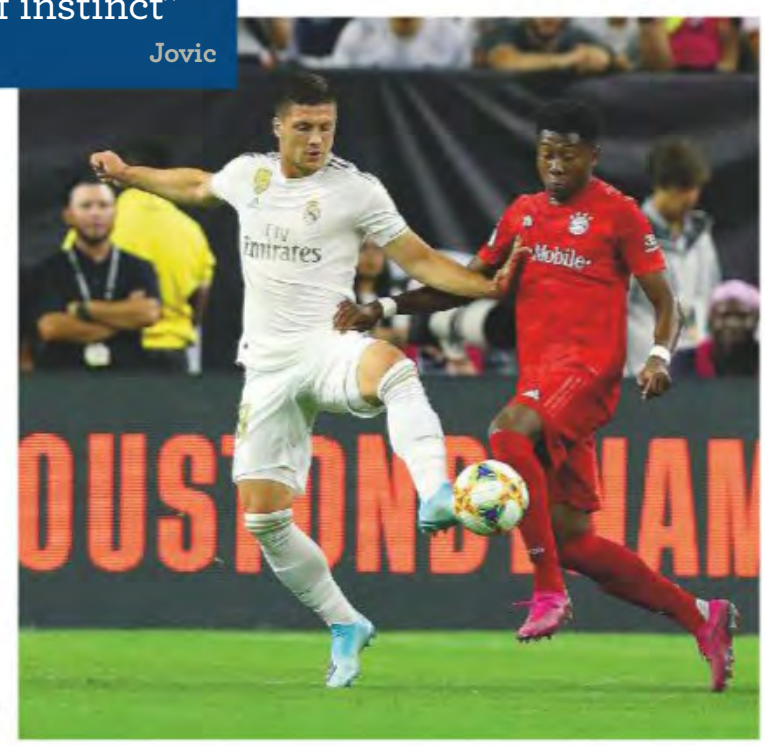
It would all turn out so much better for him on joining Bundesliga outfit Eintracht Frankfurt on a 24-month loan deal in the summer of 2017. He was much better suited to the style of play in Germany and found himself on very familiar ground at Eintracht, a club brimming with Balkan personnel. Sporting director Fredi Bobic – the former Germany striker who negotiated Jovic's arrival – was born in Slovenia, while coach Niko Kovac was a long-serving Croat international, and over the course of Jovic's two seasons at the Waldstadion there would be a host of Serb and Croat team-mates to link up with, including Ante Rebic, Filip Kostic and Mijat Gacinovic.

However, he did not exactly hit the ground running at Frankfurt, only making a handful of starts in the first half of the 2017-18 season. But behind the scenes Kovac was performing a fine impression of the horse whisperer, demanding that he be more dedicated, fitter and busy on the pitch. The youngster, perhaps chastened by his Benfica wipe-out, proved a willing student and in the "Spring Championship" he looked increasingly sharp, scoring six Bundesliga goals. Although still not a fully fledged starter, he was clearly making progress.

Earlier this year, Luka's father revealed the nuts and bolts of Kovac's motivational methods to *Bild* newspaper, saying: "I asked him [Kovac] if he was still counting on my boy. I wanted to know if Luka

Perfect...Eintracht Frankfurt was an ideal fit for the striker

> "I think God gave me this talent and this flair for goalscoring. I've always had this in me...in the box, I don't think a lot about where I should run. I would have to say it's a matter of instinct"
>
> Jovic



New start...playing for Real in pre-season against Bayern Munich

OCT 19, 2018
At 20, becomes the youngest player to score five goals in a Bundesliga game as Eintracht thrash Fortuna Dusseldorf 7–1.

MAR 14, 2019
Gets the only goal in a 1-0 win over Internazionale that puts Eintracht Frankfurt in the quarter-finals of the Europa League.

MAR 20, 2019
Scores his first senior international goal, in a friendly against Germany.

APR 17, 2019
Eintracht Frankfurt exercise an option to make his loan move permanent.

JUN 4, 2019
Leaves Germany for Real Madrid and signs a six-year contract.

would have to move on.

"'Kovac replied: 'I only want to get a reaction from him. He can be mad at me, he can think whatever he likes about me. I'm looking to provoke him and to encourage him to raise his game. I want him to realise he's not only a player in the beautiful game but that he has to be totally involved in the team's business.'"

Following Kovac's departure for Bayern Munich last year, his Eintracht successor, the Austrian Adi Hutter, arguably did an even better job of polishing the Jovic diamond. He gave him an automatic first-team spot and crucially placed him in the most favourable of attacking contexts – in a fluid and complimentary trident alongside Rebic and the French

Start...heading home his first international goal

striker Sebastien Haller. The trio would dovetail perfectly: the forceful Haller as the bulldozer target man, with Rebic and Jovic shuttling intelligently around him. The chances flowed and so did the net-busting efforts

With Jovic emerging as a grade-A finisher, Frankfurt never had a chance of retaining him. All they could do was milk the system, taking up their option to sign him in April, then making a handsome profit when Real Madrid came calling six weeks later.

Eintracht had become too small for the Serb. He now faces the mother of all challenges at the Bernabeu. **WS**

Luka Jovic

the numbers game

SERBIA

6

CAPS

GOALS

2

TRANSFER FEES

€2.2m **RED STAR** to **BENFICA** (2016)

€7m **BENFICA** to **EINTRACHT FRANKFURT** (2019)

€60m **EINTRACHT FRANKFURT** to **REAL MADRID** (2019)

EUROPA LEAGUE TOP SCORERS 2018-19

11 – **Olivier Giroud** (Chelsea)

10 – **Luka Jovic** (Eintracht Frankfurt)

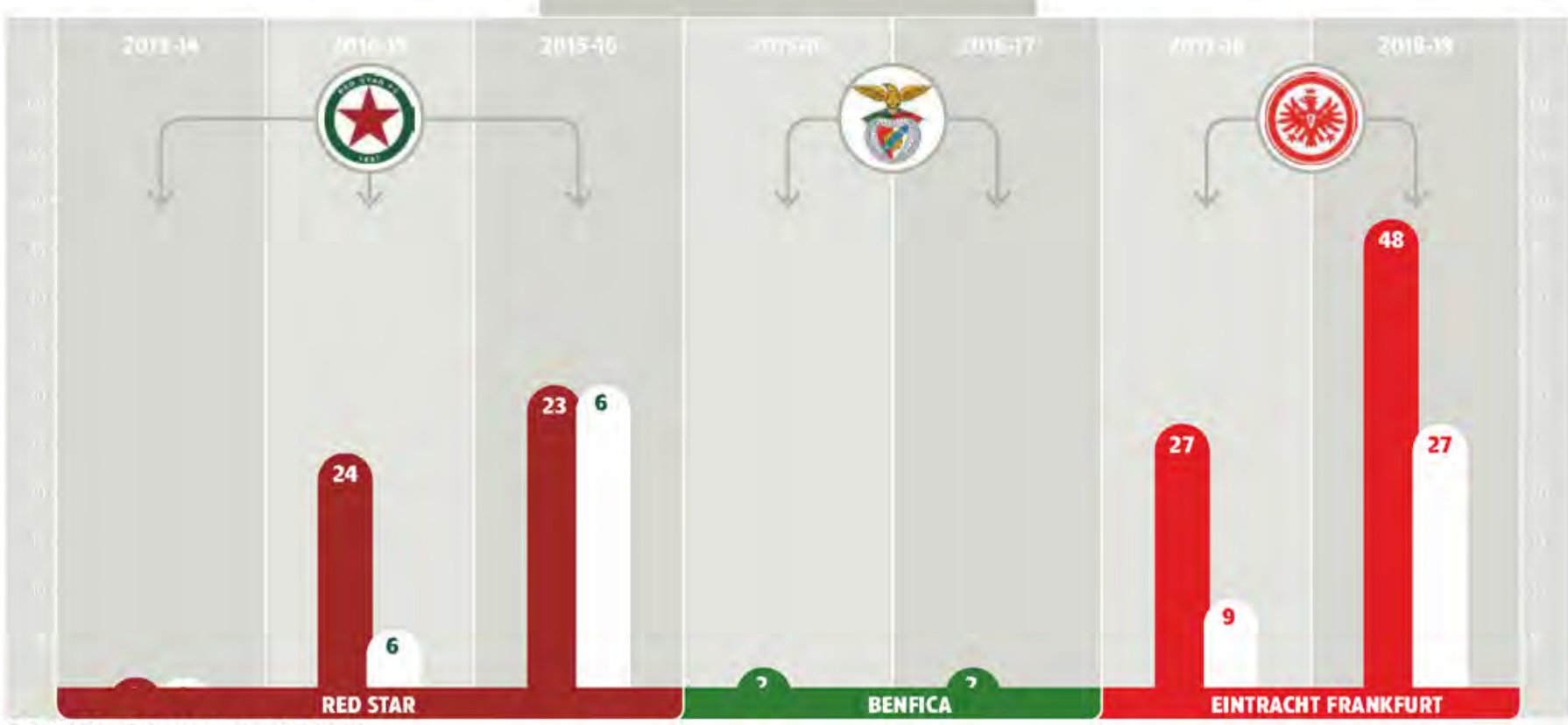
8 – **Wissam Ben Yedder** (Sevilla), **Moanes Dabour** (Red Bull Salzburg), **Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang** (Arsenal)

BUNDESLIGA TOP SCORERS 2018-19

22 – **Robert Lewandowski** (Bayern Munich)

18 – **Paco Alcacer** (Borussia Dortmund)

17 – **Kai Havertz** (B Leverkusen), **Luka Jovic** (E Frankfurt), **Andrej Kramaric** (Hoffenheim), **Marco Reus** (B Dortmund), **Wout Weghorst** (Wolfsburg)



GAMES GOALS *(as of 16.08.19).*

Rise of the rookies

Nick Bidwell profiles some of the coaches who will be taking charge of a team in the Champions League group stage for the first time

Christophe Galtier

(Lille)

If as good a judge as Jose Mourinho describes the Lille coach as the best in France's Ligue 1, it is surely time to sit up and take note.

Mourinho, regularly in attendance at Lille home games following his departure from Manchester United in December, makes no secret of his admiration for the 53-year-old Galtier, telling L'Equipe TV last term: "I think he is the coach of the season. He's qualified his side for the Champions League, they were runners-up in the French league. Then there's the high quality of the football and his development of young players. He is the man of the season."

When steering Saint-Etienne to victory in the 2013 French Cup – the club's first trophy in over three decades – Galtier was viewed by the Gallic media as a one-dimensional defensive obsessive, someone whose primary concern was keeping the back door locked. That, however, was a little unfair. At Saint-Etienne, he often used to go with a bright and breezy 4-3-3, and he certainly brought out the best of a young front runner by the name of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, who racked up goal upon goal for *Les Verts*.

At Lille, where he took over in late 2017, Galtier has worked nothing less than a miracle, taking a dysfunctional side which came within a whisker of relegation in his inaugural campaign and turning them into a total-football sensation last time out.

> "The high quality of the football and his development of young players – he is the man of the season"
>
> **Jose Mourinho on Galtier last term**

In their default 4-2-3-1 shape, Galtier's team has an extraordinary balance at its heart. Both rigorous defensively – they were the meanest rearguard in the whole of Ligue 1 last season, conceding just 33 goals – yet creative, fluid and explosive further forward, they are a mix of discipline, verve and panache.

Galtier had a wonderful set of attacking options at his disposal last season – not least Nicolas Pepe, Jonathan Ikone and Jonathan Bamba – but they still had to be placed in the right conditions to flourish, with the full-backs intelligently pushing on in support and inverted wingers Pepe and Bamba sparking mayhem when cutting inside.

A feisty left-back in his playing days with Marseille, Toulouse and Lille, as well as featuring in the French under-21 side that won the European title in 1988, Galtier boasts all the necessary attributes of a top-level coach. He is quick to make bold tactical adjustments in difficult moments, is a charismatic communicator, has a strong bond with his players and has a flair for sparking a group dynamic. His squad implicitly believes in him and utterly share his self-confidence.

"His team is convinced that they are going to win every match," says Gerard Gili, the ex-Bastia boss who employed him as his number two.

Sylvinho
(Lyon)

The first non-Frenchman to lead Lyon since Jean-Michel Aulas assumed control in 1987, OL's new Brazilian coach has quite a task in front of him.

The hardest of taskmasters and a prolific source of in-house chat on social media, Aulas can be a difficult man to get along with at the best of times – and it's fair to say Sylvinho's appointment left a large number of Lyon fans distinctly underwhelmed.

When previous incumbent Bruno Genesio was fired at the end of last season, it was believed that the club would seek a high-profile replacement such as Jose Mourinho or Laurent Blanc. Instead, the job went to a 45-year-old ex-Brazil left-back who had never been in sole charge of a professional side before.

It has also come to light that Sylvinho was not even top of the OL headhunting list. Newly installed director of sport Juninho – a brilliant midfielder for *Les Gones* in the noughties – had hoped to recruit former Chile and Argentina boss Jorge Sampaoli, who is currently at the controls of Brazilian side Santos. But with Sampaoli unavailable, Lyon had to switch to Plan B.

Aulas would no doubt vehemently deny the accusation that he brought in a wet-behind-the-ears rookie. And justifiably so. Although never the commander-in-chief of a team, Sylvinho does have an extensive pedigree as an assistant coach with spells at a number of Brazilian clubs (Cruzeiro, Recife, Nautico and Corinthians), a stint as Roberto Mancini's number two at Internazionale and an 18-month tour of duty as the right-hand man of Brazil coach Tite.

Nor was Sylvinho second-rate as a player. In a career stretching over a decade-and-a-half, he was employed by such as Arsenal, Barcelona and Manchester City, and won no fewer than 15 titles, including two Champions League crowns with Barca, in 2006 and 2009.

Knowing exactly what it takes to succeed in European football's foremost competition, one of his priorities at Lyon will be to make the team more solid defensively. For several years now, OL have given the impression of a Jekyll and Hyde XI, fluid and potent when going forward but decidedly lacking in back-to-front work ethic and tactical discipline.

"The best sides do not concede many goals," says Sylvinho. "Supporters have to see an effective side for 90 minutes. I want them to be enthusiastic about the effort of the players."

Jesse Marsch
(Salzburg)

At a time when USA are the world's number one women's team and increasing numbers of American males are making good on the European club scene, it's fitting that this Wisconsin native is about to become the first US-born coach to test himself in the Champions League. And it has been a fast-track progress for an individual who has only been operating outside the United States for 14 months, working as an assistant at RB Leipzig last term and then handed the Salzburg reins in June.

Some will inevitably argue that the 45-year-old has had it all too easy, that a career within the Red Bull football network has been conveniently mapped out for him: a journey comprising three-and-a-half seasons as head coach of MLS side New York Red Bulls, number two role in Leipzig and now at the Salzburg branch office.

His record at New York Red Bulls was excellent, featuring a club record victory tally (58), the conquest of the 2015 Supporters Shield, a US Open Cup Final appearance in 2017, a semi-final berth in the 2018 CONCACAF Champions League, three trips to the MLS play-offs and the national coach of the year award for 2015. A member of Bob Bradley's USA coaching staff at the 2010 World Cup finals, he has paid his Stateside dues.

Nor did he take the soft option when crossing the Atlantic to serve as Ralf Rangnick's lieutenant at RB Leipzig, where he had to get to grips with a new language and football culture. He also had a taste of the Europa League and helped the team to finish third in the Bundesliga and reach the German Cup Final.

Replacing Marco Rose, who quit Salzburg this summer for Borussia Monchengladbach, Marsch was not, it has to be said, a popular choice with the club's fans. A large proportion of Salzburg supporters simply cannot abide RB Leipzig, who in the past have snapped up such promising *Salzburger* as midfielders Naby Keita and Marcel Sabitzer plus centre-back Dayot Upamecano.

Fortunately, he now has the Salzburg public eating out of his hand. Despite losing half a dozen key players over the summer, his rebuilt Austrian champions won their first five league games of the new season. Playing with style and scoring at will, Marsch has a brilliant crop of youngsters at his disposal, including Norwegian striker Erling Haaland (who is the son of the ex-Leeds defender Alf-Inge), South Korean front-runner Hwan Hee-chan and Paris Saint-Germain academy graduate Antoine Bernede.

Felice Mazzu
(Genk)

Following Philippe Clement's decision to walk away from Belgian champions Genk this summer and join Club Brugge, Mazzu was by no means one of the leading contenders to fill the void.

The boss of top-flight Charleroi for the previous six seasons, the 53-year-old of Italian extraction had seemed set for the long haul with the Zebras. He had never won a trophy there and in all probability was not likely to. Yet he was living the dream nonetheless, happy to stay loyal both to his hometown club and the Black Country city where he began to play football, then studied and polished his reputation as a professional coach.

> "Without challenges, you never will know your limits"
> **Felice Mazzu**

So what a surprise it was to see him sign on the dotted line for Genk. Ultimately, ambition spoke louder than the ties that bind. "I could have chosen continuity and simplicity," he explains. "With the backing of the Charleroi directors I might have continued in what you guys call the easy life. Anyway, I'd never describe it as such.

"Without challenges, you never will know your limits. I've chosen to grasp the challenge that Genk have proposed. I know there's a risk involved, that I could burn my wings. If that's the case I'll have come up short. In life, disappointments can help you grow."

Such an honest appraisal of his chances makes him a rarity in today's games. But that does not mean he will not give it his all in Genk. He is known as an outstanding motivator, someone capable of turning a group of disparate players into a band of brothers, and in his job interview with Genk's directors he was particularly gung-ho about the project. "He said that if he came to our club, he'd blow everyone away," reveals director of sport Dimitri de Conde.

Having spent several years working as a PE teacher in schools in the Charleroi region, he only obtained his UEFA pro licence five years ago. He came to prominence as boss of Brussels club Royal White Star Bruxelles, with whom he enjoyed a brilliant campaign in 2010-11, winning promotion to the second division and reaching the quarter-finals of the Belgian Cup.

At the Charleroi helm he managed to consistently produce competitive, well-organised sides on a shoestring budget and his record speaks for itself: three top-six finishes in regular-season action (including a sensational third place in 2018) and qualification for the Europa League in 2015 – the club's first continental ticket in 21 years. He was voted Belgium's coach of the year in 2017.

He is often dubbed a defensive-minded coach, though that is something of a false trail. When his sides attack, they invariably have four or five players moving with intent in the opposition box.

Mazzu is likely to stick with the 4-3-3 system used by his predecessor Clement. The most significant innovation has been to use 21-year-old Norwegian midfield regulator Sander Berge slightly deeper.

Luis Castro
(Shakhtar Donetsk)

They do like to adhere to a tried-and-tested leadership formula at Shakhtar. Hence the decision this summer to substitute one Portuguese tactician for another, filling the gap left by Roma-bound Paulo Fonseca with the ex-Vitoria Guimaraes boss.

In his three seasons with Shakhtar, Fonseca won a hat-trick of domestic doubles and a place in the Champions League round of 16 in 2017-18. And the 58-year-old Castro will clearly be expected to continue that go-ahead vibe. Interestingly, the pair once worked together, during the 2013-14 season, at Porto, where Fonseca was first-team coach and Castro was in charge of the reserves. And when Fonseca stood down in the spring of 2014, it was Castro who stepped in as caretaker for two months.

After good work with Porto's B team, then Rio Ave and Chaves, Castro was appointed Guimaeres coach a year ago and led them to a creditable fifth in the Portuguese top flight to claim a place in this season's Europa League qualifiers. Combining defensive watchfulness,

collective nous and a large dollop of attacking invention and fluidity, his side were a match for almost anyone in the Primeira Liga, notably coming from two goals down to win 3-2 at Porto, beating Sporting at home and very unfortunate to twice lose narrowly to champions Benfica.

Shakhtar essentially recruited Castro for three reasons: the creative football he tends to serve up, his well-earned reputation as a sponsor of young talent, and his Portuguese mother tongue. For quite some time Shakhtar have recruited Brazilian players en masse, and with the club's Samba connection currently in double figures communication breakdowns are not an option.

A vital aspect of Castro's new brief will be to give every encouragement to homegrown prospects. The Ukraine squad which claimed gold at this year's World Under-20s contained five Shakhtar youngsters and they hope two or three will push hard at the first-team door.

In marked contrast to so many coaches in Portugal, Castro does not rant and rave on the touchline. A defender in his playing days, he attributes his competitive spirit to the debilitating blood disorder he had as a child.

"My inner strength to overcome difficulties comes from this period," he says.

Pedro Martins

(Olympiakos)

In his role as owner of Greek powerhouse Olympiakos and two-time champions of Europe Nottingham Forest, the inimitable Evangelos Marinakis has never been one to allow a first-team coach to outstay his welcome, hiring and firing with abandon. So how unusual it was to see Marinakis to stand resolutely by his man this summer, insisting that former Portuguese international midfielder Martins was the ideal figure to take the club forward.

Marinakis easily could have pulled the trigger. For a club used to dominating the Greek scene, two seasons without a trophy is a destabilising eternity and in terms of concrete end -product, Martins – headhunted in April 2018 – had failed to deliver, his side "only" securing second place last term, behind PAOK.

Here was a rare instance of Marinakis looking at the big picture, taking stock, listening to fans and noting the many positive changes that Martins had instituted: the entertaining free-

flowing football, the vastly improved tactical awareness and organisation of the side, the fighting spirit and squad togetherness. In the second half of the campaign, Olympiakos lost just once in the league – a 3-1 defeat at PAOK – and were generally quite unstoppable, winning all of their last 10 games.

Continuity suddenly looked a good option for Marinakis and he has been proved absolutely right, with Martins' reinvigorated troop cruising to a Champions League berth thanks to victories over Viktoria Plzen, Istanbul BB and Krasnodar. And all achieved without talismanic attacking midfielder and skipper Kostas Fortounis, who suffered a cruciate ligament injury during a pre-season friendly against Hamburg in Austria.

"It was very important for both Olympiakos and Greece that we've progressed to the Champions League group phase," declared Martins. "We'll now have the chance to properly assess the potential of our team.

"Right now, it's fantastic to watch the quality of our football and the way we execute a game plan. We aim to continue moving in this direction."

Martins, an engine-room enforcer in his playing days for Feirense, Sporting, Guimaraes, Santa Clara and Alverca, has a reputation in Portugal of being something of a miracle-worker coach, someone capable of sprinkling magic dust on average to middling sides. The proof of the pudding? The unexpected success he enjoyed when qualifying Maritimo, Rio Ave and Guimaraes for the Europa League.

Now for his next big continental challenge, with Olympiakos back in the Champions League and eager not to sell themselves short.

> "It was very important for both Olympiakos and Greece that we've progressed to the Champions League group phase"

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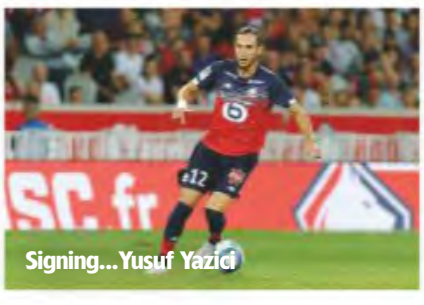
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

	STADIUM	COACH	OWNER
Ajax	Ajax's 54,000-capacity home was recently renamed the Johan Cruyff Arena in honour of the club's greatest player. The retractable roof caused initial problems for the pitch when the stadium opened in 1996, but Ajax now co-exist with regular rock concerts.	Erik Ten Hag was a relatively low-key appointment when he replaced Marcel Keizer. The 49-year-old had no previous connection with Ajax but his success with Utrecht, leading them to fifth and fourth in the Dutch league, earned him the call.	Ajax are the only Dutch club to be listed on the stock exchange, with 90 per cent of shares owned by fans and the general public. An advisory board appoints the directors, who are led by chief executive Edwin Van der Sar, the club's former goalkeeper.
Atalanta	The team from Bergamo in northern Italy will play Champions League "home" games at Milan's San Siro stadium because their own 21,300-capacity Stadio Atleti Azzurri d'Italia is being renovated. San Siro's curva stands will be closed, reducing the capacity to 43,000.	Former Genoa boss Gian Piero Gasperini has worked wonders since taking charge of Atalanta in 2016. The 61-year-old has more than restored a reputation that was tarnished by a disastrous spell at Internazionale in 2011. Speculation persists over his Atalanta future.	Antonio Percassi played for Atalanta in the 1970s before quitting football to build a fortune in retail. The 66-year-old returned for a second spell as club president in 2010. Under him, turnover rose to €155m in 2018 and a €27m wage bill is only the 14th largest in Serie A.
Atletico Madrid	The 67,000-capacity Metropolitano, which hosted the 2019 Champions League Final, has been open since September 2017. The move to the new stadium in eastern Madrid boosted Atletico's revenues to €313m in 2018. Named Wanda after their Chinese sponsors.	The 49-year-old Argentinian Diego Simeone has been the central figure in the making of modern Atletico, but he is now facing a major rebuilding job following the sale of Antoine Griezmann. Entering his ninth season in Madrid, he is currently contracted until 2022.	CEO Miguel Angel Gil Marin, the son of controversial former chairman Jesus Gil, is the club's majority shareholder. Last year Israeli businessman Idan Ofer bought 17 per cent from Chinese company Wanda to increase his stake to 32 per cent.
Barcelona	The 99,000-capacity Camp Nou remains Europe's largest stadium. It hosted the European Cup Final in 1989 and Champions League Final in 1999. There are advanced plans to expand the capacity to 105,000 and place a roof on the stadium.	Ernesto Valverde is starting his third season. His functional tactics have been criticised but his side have won the last two Liga title with ease. The 55-year-old former Athletic Bilbao boss is contracted until the end of this season, with the option for one more.	One of four Spanish clubs (with Real Madrid, Athletic Bilbao and Osasuna) to be owned by their members. The 140,000 socios elect the club president. The club had record revenues of €990m this year, with Europe's biggest wage bill of over €500m.
Bayer Leverkusen	Sandwiched between Cologne and Dusseldorf, the BayArena holds 29,400 fans for European matches. Leverkusen have played there since its opening in 1958. It was revamped in 1997 and 2009, and hosted games at the 2006 World Cup and 2011 Women's World Cup.	Peter Bosz took over from Heiko Herrlich in December 2018, 12 months after being sacked by Dortmund, where despite a strong start to the season his side went on a 12-match winless streak. The 55-year-old Dutchman took Ajax to the 2017 Europa League Final.	Leverkusen began life as the works team of pharmaceutical giant Bayer AG. The company are based in the industrial city of Leverkusen and have funded the club for many years through sponsorship – a relationship that leads to rival fans dismissing the club as "plastic".
Bayern Munich	The Allianz Arena holds 70,000 for European matches. Initially shared with city rivals 1860, it is now wholly owned by Bayern after relegated 1860's financial problems forced a sale of their share and a return to their original Grunwalder Stadion.	Niko Kovac endured a difficult first season in Munich after arriving from Eintracht Frankfurt last summer. The 47-year-old Croat appeared doomed at one point and was criticised for a cautious approach, but his players rallied to win another Bundesliga title.	Majority owned by supporters and run by former players, while corporations Audi and Adidas own small stakes. President Uli Hoeness is due to step down at the end of the year. In 2017–18, Bayern had revenues of €657.4m and an operating profit of €136.5m.
Benfica	The 64,000-capacity Estadio da Luz was built for Euro 2004 on the site of the old Stadium of Light. Luz, which translates as "light", is the name of the local Lisbon neighbourhood. Staged the 2014 Champions League Final between Real and Atletico Madrid.	Former Benfica B team boss Bruno Lage succeeded Rui Vitoria in January after club officials failed to persuade Jose Mourinho to return. The 43-year-old, former assistant to Carlos Carvalhal at Sheffield Wednesday and Swansea City, agreed a contract until 2023.	The club is owned by its members and president Luis Felipe Vieira was re-elected for a fifth term in 2016. The club claims to have a world-record number of paying members: in 2006 *The Guinness Book of Records* confirmed the club as having 160,000 socios.
Borussia Dortmund	The Westfalenstadion is known as Signal Iduna Park for sponsorship purposes. For Bundesliga matches, the 24,500-capacity Sudtribune – Europe's largest standing terrace – boosts capacity to 81,000. But for all-seater Champions League matches that drops to 66,000.	Lucien Favre made his name in his native Switzerland, with Servette and Zurich, before enjoying success with Borussia Monchengladbach and a spell in France with Nice. The 61-year-old Swiss prefers a tight pressing game with swift counter-attacks on the flanks.	Dortmund were the first club to be floated on the German stock market and like other Bundesliga sides no individual owns a majority share. CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke oversaw a 2018 turnover of €317m, with a wage bill of €187m, second only to Bayern Munich in Germany.

EUROPEAN PEDIGREE		HOW THEY QUALIFIED	TACTICAL TALKING POINT
Ajax last won the European Cup in 1995, more than 20 years after their Cruyff-inspired three-in-a-row triumphs in 1971, 1972 and 1973. After last year's run to the semi-finals, fans fear it may be another 20 years before such a generation of players appears again.	Through... beating APOEL	Ajax won their 34th Dutch league title but still had to pre-qualify for the group stage. They came through a potential banana skin against Greek champions PAOK, winning 5-4 on aggregate, and then saw off APOEL of Cyprus with a 2-0 aggregate victory.	For all the speculation over which Ajax kids might step up to replace the likes of Matthijs De Ligt (sold to Juventus) and Frenkie De Jong (Barcelona), it was 30-year-old Dusan Tadic and 36-year-old Klaas-Jan Huntelaar who scored crucial goals in the qualifying rounds.
Competing in the Champions League for the first time, but they reached the semis of the 1988 Cup-winners Cup as a second-tier side. They took part in the 2016-17 Europa League group stage, but failed to qualify last year after losing to Copenhagen in the qualifiers.	Key...Papu Gomez (right)	Third place in Serie A last season was the highest finish in Atalanta's 112-year history. They impressed with their attacking outlook, with key roles for Papu Gomez and Dusan Zapata, alongside midfielder Remo Freuler and full-back Timothy Castagne.	New signings – Luis Muriel (Sevilla), Martin Skrtel (free) and Ruslan Malinovskyi (Genk) – have boosted the squad. They remain hugely dependent on Gomez, but how will the 31-year-old cope with midweek Champions League games in addition to the Serie A campaign?
Champions League runners-up twice, losing to Real Madrid in 2014 and 2016, after defeat in the 1974 European Cup Final against Bayern Munich in 1974. Cup-winners Cup winners in 1962 and three-times Europa League winners (2010, 2012 and 2018).	Central...Diego Simeone	Second in La Liga, 11 points behind Barcelona but eight ahead of Real Madrid. But the key figures in last season's team – Griezmann (Barcelona), Rodri (Man City), Lucas Hernandez (Bayern) – have gone, with the money from their sales used to fund a major rebuild.	Will new star Joao Felix (€126m from Benfica) be deployed off the main striker or at the front of a diamond behind a front two in a more adventurous formation? And how will Atletico cope with the departures of key defenders Diego Godin, Juanfran and Filipe Luis?
Five-times European champions (in 1992, 2006, 2009, 2011 and 2015) with a record four Cup-winners Cups (1979, 1982, 1989 and 1997). They have reached the Champions League knockout stage every year since 2005, when Lionel Messi made his debut for the club.	Options... Frenkie De Jong	Barca retained the Spanish Liga title with ease. It was their eighth league championship in 11 seasons but it did not compensate for the disappointment of losing to Liverpool in the Champions League semi-finals, when they threw away a three-goal lead from the first leg.	The summer arrivals of Frenkie De Jong and Antoine Griezmann give Valverde valuable new tactical options. Barca spent the summer flirting with Neymar over a return to the club. But how would the Brazilian fit in with Messi, Luis Suarez and Griezmann?
The club's one and only European silverware success is the 1988 UEFA Cup. In the Champions League, the high point has been reaching the 2002 Final in Glasgow, where a team led by Michael Ballack lost to Zinedine Zidane's Real Madrid.	Home...BayArena	After Bosz's arrival last December, Leverkusen's fortunes improved dramatically in the second half of the season, moving from ninth place at the winter break to sneaking into the top four. Kai Havertz and Julian Brandt were both outstanding in attacking roles.	Like Bosz's Ajax and Dortmund sides, Leverkusen's attack-minded approach features a high line with aggressive pressing. Can Kerem Demirbay, signed from Hoffenheim for €32m, replace Dortmund-bound Brandt as a free-roaming number eight?
Bayern are by far Germany's most successful club, with five European titles, the latest in 2013 (to add to 1974, 1975, 1976 and 2001). Having also won the 1967 Cup-winners Cup and 1996 UEFA Cup, they are one of a handful of clubs who have won all three European club trophies.	Loan...Philippe Coutinho	Bundesliga champions yet again after overhauling Dortmund, but they lost some big names – Mats Hummels (Dortmund), Arjen Robben (retired), Franck Ribery (Fiorentina), Rafinha (Flamengo) – this summer. Ivan Perisic and Philippe Coutinho came in on loan.	Bayern broke with convention by spending big on young defensive reinforcements (Benjamin Pavard and Lucas Hernandez) while French midfielder Michael Cuisance (€10m from Gladbach) slipped under the radar, with all the attention focused on Coutinho's loan from Barcelona.
Portugal's most decorated club were European champions in 1961 and 1962, inspired by a young Eusebio, and runners-up in 1963, 1965, 1968, 1988 and 1990. They also reached the Final of the UEFA Cup/Europa League in 1983, 2013 and 2014.	Gap...Jota (left)	Champions of Portugal for a record 37th time after a remarkable turnaround under Lage. They moved from fourth place to top spot in the early months of 2019. Youth was the key, but exciting new talent Joao Felix was sold to Atletico Madrid this summer.	Benfica have invested heavily in their youth system in recent years and the sale of academy products has revolutionised the club's finances. However, can the latest batch of youngsters step up? Notably, can Jota fill the gap left by Felix?
Continental champions in 1997, when they unexpectedly beat Juventus 3-1 in Munich. Runners-up to Bayern in the all-German 2013 Champions League Final at Wembley. Won the Cup-winners Cup in 1966 and were UEFA Cup runners-up in 1993 and 2002.	Press...Lucien Favre	Finished second in a tight Bundesliga title race, losing out to Bayern despite having held a comfortable winter lead. Their young team had an average age of 24, with Marco Reus and Jadon Sancho the stars, and Paco Alcacer emerging as the key goalscorer.	Will the returning Mats Hummels, discarded by Bayern, give the backline the solidity it needs? New signings Thorgan Hazard and Julian Brandt give new wide attacking options. In the striker role, will Favre opt for false nine Mario Gotze or the more conventional Alcacer?

	STADIUM	COACH	OWNER
Chelsea	The capacity of Stamford Bridge is set to remain at 40,800 after plans to expand to a 60,000-seat arena were placed on hold "due to the current unfavourable investment climate", with Roman Abramovich reportedly reluctant to commit money to the plan.	Former midfielder Frank Lampard effectively has a free pass this season, with the club's recruitment policy in limbo as they serve out a global transfer ban. The 41-year-old signed a three-deal this summer following his departure from Derby County after a single season.	Abramovich has invested a total of £1.125billion in the club since 2003 but his uncertain UK visa status has seen him relocate to Israel from London, raising the possibility that he may sell the club. His fortune helped the club turn over £448m in 2018, with a wage bill of £246m.
Club Brugge	The 29,000-capacity Jan Breydal stadium is situated on the outskirts of Bruges, the capital of West Flanders in north-west Belgium and the country's seventh largest city by population. Built in 1975, it was redeveloped for the European Championship in 2000.	Philippe Clement won the title last season with Genk and then promptly jumped ship to Club Brugge, who have much healthier finances and far greater support. The 45-year-old former Belgium defender played over 250 times for the club.	Entrepreneur Bart Verhaeghe became club president in 2011, becoming the majority shareholder in 2012. He is also heavily involved with the Belgian federation and was a member of the committee that appointed Robert Martinez as national coach.
Dinamo Zagreb	Stadion Maksimir holds 35,000 and is also the main home of Croatia's national side. Dinamo were fined €20,000 by UEFA in April and ordered to play a game behind closed doors as punishment for racist chanting during a Europa League game against Benfica.	Nenad Bjelica joined Dinamo in May 2018 after his release from Polish side Lech Poznan and guided Dinamo to the Croatian domestic double last season. The 48-year-old former Croatia international has also coached in Austria, Italy and Poland.	Former president Zdravko Mamic, long considered to be the most powerful individual in Croatian football, is still on the run in Bosnia after being found guilty of corruption last year. His younger brother, Zoran, remains the club's sporting director.
Galatasaray	Ali Sami Yen, known as Turk Telekom stadium for sponsorship purposes, holds 52,000 spectators and was opened in 2011. Like the old stadium, which was also named after club founder Ali Sami Yen, the new arena is in northern Istanbul on the European side of the city.	Fatih Terim, aka "The Emperor", recently signed a new five-year deal, a reward for winning back-to-back titles in his fourth spell at the club. The victories helped to restore the 65-year-old's reputation after he quit as Turkey boss following a fight with a kebab shop owner in 2017.	Like most Turkish teams, Gala are a members' sports club. Last season, Galatasaray were deducted €6m in prize money by UEFA and were forced to limit their Champions League squad to 21 players following breaches of Financial Fair Play regulations.
Genk	The Fenixstadion holds 21,500 spectators for European matches and is known as the Luminus Arena for sponsorship purposes. It was rebuilt in 1999 on the site of the former stadium of Waterschei, one of the two clubs that controversially merged to form KRC Genk in 1988.	Felice Mazzu was the surprise choice to replace Philippe Clement, who left for Club Brugge this summer. The 53-year-old was previously at Charleroi, and although he has no European experience he coped well with the rapid turnover of players at his previous club.	Racing Genk were formed in 1988 by the merger of local clubs Waterschei and Winterslag, two teams who represented workers from the town's declining coal industry. Current chairman Peter Croonen's father, Louis, held the same position in the early 2000s.
Internazionale	The future of the 80,000-capacity San Siro is in doubt after fellow tenants Milan announced plans to build a new arena next door to the current stadium. But it remains to be seen whether the municipal council, owners of the stadium, will agree to such a redevelopment.	Former Juventus, Italy and Chelsea boss Antonio Conte was appointed this summer, replacing Luciano Spalletti, who paid the price for failing to mount a serious title challenge or win any silverware. The 50-year-old Conte signed a three-year contract.	Club president Steven Zhang, aged 28, is the son of Zhang Jindong, chairman of China's electronics retailer Suning, who bought a 70 per cent majority stake in the club in 2016 for €270m from Massimo Moratti and previous majority owner Erick Thohir.
Juventus	The 41,000-capacity Juventus Stadium, which is known as Allianz Stadium for sponsorship purposes, opened in 2011 as a purpose-built arena to replace the unloved and impractical Stadio delle Alpi, which had been Juve's home since the 1990 World Cup.	Maurizio Sarri was appointed this summer after a year in London at Chelsea, where his tactics alienated fans but won the Europa League and secured a top-four finish. The 60-year-old former banker made his name in spells at Empoli (2012-15) and Napoli (2015-18).	The Agnelli family, industrialists who made their fortune from the Fiat motor empire, have run the club since the 1920s. Current chairman Andrea Agnelli, the son of Umberto Agnelli and nephew of Gianni Agnelli, is the latest family member to take charge.
Lille	The 50,000-seater Stade Pierre Mauroy was opened in 2012 and named after a former mayor of Lille and prime minister of France. The stadium hosted a number of games at Euro 2016 and the venue has also hosted basketball matches and Davis Cup tennis.	Christoph Galtier has worked wonders since taking charge of Lille in 2017, steering them away from the relegation zone and into the Ligue 1 Champions League places. The 53-year-old previously spent eight seasons as coach of Saint-Etienne.	The Luxembourg-born Spanish businessman Gerard Lopez became the majority owner of the club in 2016. He also owns Luxembourg club Fola Esch, where he played in his youth. He previously operated the Lotus Formula One racing team and has worked as a player agent.

EUROPEAN PEDIGREE		HOW THEY QUALIFIED	TACTICAL TALKING POINT
Champions League Final winners against Bayern in Munich in 2012, Chelsea added another European trophy in May after beating Arsenal in the Europa League Final in Baku. The club also won the 2013 Europa League and the 1971 and 1998 Cup-winners Cups.	Choice... Jorginho (right)	Finished in the Premier League top four but their Europa League victory guaranteed them a place in the Champions League group stage. Eden Hazard was the star but he announced his departure in the minutes after the 4-1 victory over Arsenal in Baku.	Lampard is giving opportunities to youngsters like midfielder Mason Mount, but he still has a Hazard-sized hole to fill and faces the same dilemma as predecessor Maurizio Sarri over whether to deploy N'Golo Kante or Jorginho as the team's deep-lying central midfielder.
The club has twice reached European Finals – the UEFA Cup in 1976 and European Cup in 1978 – losing to Liverpool on both occasions. In the modern Champions League era, they have not got out of the group stage in five attempts.	Victorious... celebrating against LSAK	The runners-up to Genk in last season's Belgian First Division came through two rounds of qualifying. A dramatic injury-time goal in Ukraine gave them a 3-3 draw (and a 4-3 win on aggregate) against Dynamo Kiev. They then overcame Austrian side LASK.	Brugge play 4-3-3 under Clement, having ditched the three-man defence and wing-backs of last season. South African Percy Tau, on loan from Brighton, adds skill and pace but can be unpredictable – he collected two yellow cards and was sent off against Dynamo Kiev.
Dinamo have competed six times in the Champions League group stage but have never managed to reach the knockout phase. Last season, after losing a play-off to Young Boys, they dropped into the Europa League and reached the round of 16 for the first time.	Play-off... Rosenborg	Last season's runaway Croatian champions beat Georgian title winners Saburtalo Tbilisi and Hungary's Ferencvaros in the qualifying rounds, and then overcame Norwegian champions Rosenborg in the play-off to claim their place in the group stage.	Spanish under-21 international striker Dani Olmo has been Dinamo's most important player for the past two seasons, but he was linked with a deadline-day move to a number of top clubs, including Atletico Madrid, Valencia and Benfica.
Galatasaray are the first – and so far only – Turkish club to have won a European club trophy. In Terim's first spell as coach, a team featuring Gheorghe Hagi and Hakan Sukur won the 2000 UEFA Cup, beating Arsenal on penalties in the Final in Copenhagen.	Punt... Emre Mor (left)	Won their second successive Turkish title – and 22nd in total – after overhauling Istanbul Basaksehir, who had been eight points clear. The defending champions won a dramatic title decider 2-1 on the penultimate weekend of the season.	With finances tight, Gala are gambling on loan deals to reinforce the squad, with Jean Michael Seri from Fulham and Steven Nzonzi from Roma. They are also taking a punt on former teen sensation Emre Mor from Celta Vigo, as well as veteran winger Ryan Babel.
Two previous appearances in the Champions League but have yet to win a game. They reached the Europa League quarters last season. Their biggest contribution to European football has been in the scouting and development of young players.	Genk... Fenixstadion	Belgian champions, their fourth league title and first since 2011. Leandro Trossard was the star and the latest talent sold (to Brighton) after such as Yannick Carrasco, Christian Benteke, Thibaut Courtois, Divock Origi, Kevin De Bruyne, Kalidou Koulibaly and Leon Bailey.	Last season, Genk were the most attack-minded side in the Belgian league. But will they have to moderate such tactics in European competition. Midfielders Theo Bongonda and Ianis Hagi are the latest arrivals on the Genk conveyor belt.
Inter, coached by Jose Mourinho, won a third European crown in 2010 after beating Bayern Munich in Madrid, to add to titles in 1964 and 1965. Last year's participation in the Champions League group stage was their first appearance in the competition for eight years.	Arrival... Romelu Lukaku	Finished fourth in Serie A, a point ahead of city rivals Milan but 11 points behind champions Juventus. Much of the campaign was overshadowed by a feud with Argentinian striker Mauro Icardi, who remained at the club through the summer despite several offers.	Will the arrival of Uruguayan Diego Godin allow Conte to play his trademark three at the back? How will Romelu Lukaku, the main summer signing at €72m, fare? And can on-loan Alexis Sanchez rediscover the form that eluded him at Manchester United?
Juve are Italy's most decorated club in terms of domestic honours, but as far as Europe goes they remain in the shadow of Milan's seven titles with just two victories, in 1985 and 1996. They also won the 1984 Cup-winners Cup and UEFA Cup in 1977, 1990 and 1993.	Team...Sarri and Ronaldo	Champions of Italy for the eighth successive season, with Cristiano Ronaldo becoming the first player to win titles in England, Spain and Italy. But the departure of coach Massimiliano Allegri, who stepped down after five highly successful seasons, marked the end of an era.	Juve made some impressive signings with the likes of Aaron Ramsey, Matthijs De Ligt, Adrien Rabiot and the return of Gianluigi Buffon. But even with the sales of Moises Kean and Joao Cancelo, the squad looks overloaded. Can Sarri keep everyone happy?
Lille are back in the Champions League for the first time since 2012, when they finished bottom of their group, behind Bayern Munich, Valencia and BATE Borisov. Their best performance was in 2006-07, when they lost to Manchester United in the round of 16.	 Signing...Yusuf Yazici	Finished second in Ligue 1 to Paris Saint-Germain, providing the strongest challenge to the perpetual champions. However, the outstanding players in their campaign have left, with Nicolas Pepe sold to Arsenal and Thiago Mendes joining Lyon.	It was a busy summer, but can the new arrivals – who include Renato Sanches (Bayern €20m), Yusuf Yazici (Trabzonspor, €16.5m), Victor Osimhen (Charleroi €12m) and Timothy Weah (PSG, €10m) – compensate for the loss of Pepe and Mendes?

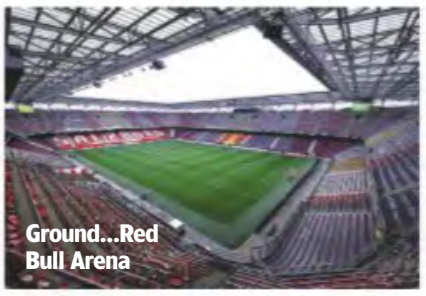
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

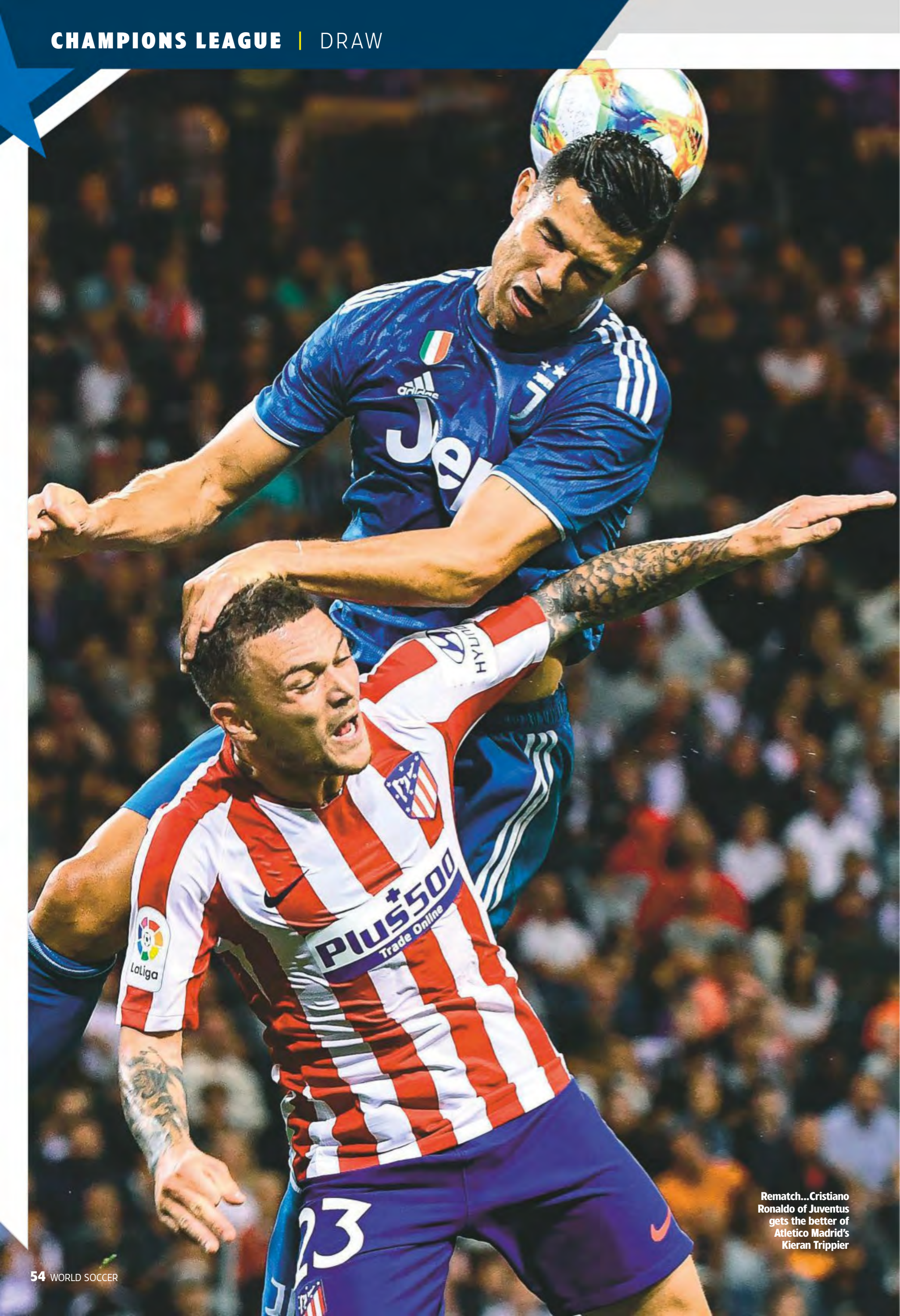
	STADIUM	COACH	OWNER
Liverpool	The expansion of the main stand that increased capacity to 54,000 with more corporate seating has not dulled the atmosphere on European nights. Plans were recently announced for an expansion of the Anfield Road end to take capacity above 60,000.	Jurgen Klopp recently hinted he could retire when his current Liverpool contract expires in 2022 and he will be 55. But the former Dortmund boss has often been linked with a return to Germany to coach either Bayern Munich or the national side.	Fenway Sports Group, headed by John Henry and Tom Werner, is arguably the most successful American owner of a European club, having successfully used complex analytics to highlight transfer targets. Also owners of baseball side Boston Red Sox.
Lokomotiv Moscow	Lokomotiv Stadium was rebuilt in 2002, though there has been a stadium on the same site in north-eastern Moscow since 1935. Known as the RZD Arena for sponsorship purposes following a controversial deal with owner Russian Railways.	Yuri Semin is in his fourth spell in charge, assisted by former player Dmitri Loskov. The 72-year-old has also coached Dynamo Kiev, Dinamo Moscow and, briefly in 2005, the Russian national side. A former player, he has also had a spell as club president.	Lokomotiv have a long association with the railway industry. In the Soviet era, the club came under the control of the railways ministry. Now Russian Railways, a government-owned company, has a 90 per cent stake and has been accused of "financial doping" via sponsorship.
Lyon	Parc Olympique Lyonnais is known as Groupama Stadium for sponsorship purposes. The 58,000-seat arena in an eastern suburb of Lyon was opened in January 2016 in time for Euro 2016. It replaced the Stade de Gerland, which still hosts rugby.	Former Arsenal, Celta Vigo and Barcelona midfielder Sylvinho was a surprise choice to replace Bruno Genesio this summer. The 45-year-old Brazilian previously held assistant roles at Cruzeiro, Internazionale and with Brazil's national side.	President Jean-Michel Aulas has owned the club since 1987. A notoriously tough negotiator in transfer dealings, he has helped the side to turnover €164m in 2018, making them the second wealthiest club in France, after Paris Saint-Germain.
Manchester City	City of Manchester Stadium, known as Etihad Stadium for sponsorship purposes, holds 55,000 spectators, many of whom boo UEFA's Champions League anthem on European nights in protest at perceived sleights towards City and their wealthy Emirati owners.	A Champions League winner twice with Barcelona, in 2008 and 2011, Pep Guardiola has failed to make it past the quarter-finals with Bayern Munich or City. Despite interest from Juventus, the 48-year-old insists he will honour the last two years of his City contract.	The Abu Dhabi United Group, an investment company owned by the Emirati state's royal family, bought City in 2008 and have been criticised for using their investment to "sport-wash" the reputation of UAE, a country criticised for its appalling human rights record.
Napoli	Recent renovations to repair the dilapidated Stadio San Paolo in preparation for the Summer Universiade student games reduced capacity to 55,000. The stadium remains the third largest in Serie A ground although the club would like to move to a new, modern arena.	Carlo Ancelotti replaced Chelsea-bound Mauricio Sarri in 2018. A serial title winner – in Italy, France, Germany and England – the 60-year-old has won the European Cup twice as a player (Milan) and the Champions League three times as a coach (Milan and Real Madrid).	Film producer Aurelio De Laurentiis has been club president since 2004, when bankruptcy forced the relegation of the club to Italy's third tier. Often outspoken, the 70-year-old has since overseen the rise of the club back to the higher echelons of Serie A.
Olympiakos	The Georgios Karaiskakis Stadium, which holds 32,000 spectators, is named after a Greek independence war hero. The stadium is located in Pireus, the port that lies 12km from the centre of Athens. Olympic cycling took place on the site of the stadium at the 1896 Olympics.	Pedro Martins worked wonders at small-town clubs in his native Portugal, guiding Maritimo, Rio Ave and Guimares into the Europa League. His appointment in 2018 continued the trend of Portuguese managers at the club, after Marco Silva and Vitor Pereira.	Evangelos Marinakis and is a multi-millionaire shipowner and Pireus politician who has been club president since 2010. In 2017, he also became owner of Nottingham Forest. A controversial figure who has been criticised for his hiring and firing of coaches.
Paris Saint-Germain	Parc des Princes lost its position as Paris' premier venue when the Stade de France was built for the 1998 World Cup. But the stadium in the south-west of the city has been improved by the club's Qatari owners and currently holds 47,000 spectators.	Thomas Tuchel succeeded Jurgen Klopp at both Mainz and Borussia Dortmund but the 46-year-old German's position at PSG remains precarious after a first season in which Ligue 1 dominance was not converted into success on the wider European stage.	Nasser Al Khelaifi is the front man for the government-backed Qatari Sports Investments. Despite being indicted over bribery allegations regarding Qatar's hosting of the world athletics championships, Al Khelaifi was elected to UEFA's executive committee in 2019.
RB Leipzig	The 42,000-capacity RB Arena in Leipzig was formerly known as the Zentralstadion and was redeveloped as a venue for the 2006 World Cup finals. When drinks firm Red Bull took over the licence of then fifth-tier side SSV Markranstadt in 2009, the renamed club moved in.	Julian Nagelsmann became the Bundesliga's youngest-ever boss when he took charge of Hoffenheim in 2016 at the age of 28, earning the nickname "Baby Mourinho". Now 32, he signed a four-year contract to coach Leipzig this summer.	Highly controversial energy-drinks manufacturer Red Bull runs the club as a marketing exercise and with its own employees in all key management roles – in contrast to the 50+1 ownership rule that applies to all other Bundesliga clubs.

EUROPEAN PEDIGREE		HOW THEY QUALIFIED	TACTICAL TALKING POINT
Six-times European champions, in 1977, 1978, 1981, 1984, 2005 and, after the victory over Tottenham Hotspur in Madrid, 2019. Now one title away from drawing level with Milan as the second-most decorated club in Europe, behind Real Madrid.	Holders...last season's winners	Runners-up to Manchester City in the Premier League after an extremely close battle fought on two fronts which culminated in another Champions League success. The strength of their squad was reflected in their lack of action in the transfer market this summer.	The dashing attacking trident of Salah, Mane and Firmino was crucial to Liverpool's success under Klopp. But will they suffer any effects from their summer exertions? Full-backs Robertson and Alexander-Arnold are actually the team's most creative players.
Last season, Lokomotiv were back in the Champions League group stage for the first time since 2004 but finished bottom of their group, behind Porto, Schalke and Galatasaray. They twice reached the Cup-winners Cup semi-finals, in 1998 and 1999.	Reinforcement ...Grzegorz Krychowiak	Lokomotiv went into last season as the defending champions but ended up second in the Russian league to Zenit. They finished level on points with Krasnodar but took the Champions League spot through a better head-to-head record.	A solid defensive side was reinforced this summer with the signing of Polish midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak from Paris Saint-Germain. They don't score many goals – last season's top scorer, midfielder Anton Miranchuk, recorded 11 goals.
Regular competitors in the Champions League, Lyon's best achievement was reaching the semi-finals in 2010, where they lost to Bayern Munich. They were beaten 5-1 in Barcelona in last season's round of 16 following a goalless draw in the first leg.	Lyon...Groupama Stadium	Third in Ligue 1 behind Paris Saint-Germain and Lille was a disappointing result which led to Genesio stepping down. The move to appoint Sylvinho – along with fellow Brazilian Juninho, the former Lyon midfielder, as sporting director – was seen as a bold move.	Lyon spent heavily this summer to bring in Thiago Mendes (Lille) and Joachim Andersen (Sampdoria), using the proceeds from the sales of Ferland Mendy (Real Madrid), Tanguy Ndombele (Spurs) and Nabil Fekir (Betis). Early signs are that Sylvinho has a more focused team.
Despite their wealth, City have yet to reach a Champions League Final. Their best performance was in 2016, when they lost to Real Madrid in the semi-finals. They have lost in the quarters for the past two seasons. Their only European trophy is the 1970 Cup-winners Cup.	Winner...Pep Guardiola	Champions of England for the second consecutive season and with a record points total. Raheem Sterling, David Silva, Kevin De Bruyne and top scorer Sergio Aguero were all outstanding as they blew many teams away with their pressing and possession play.	City's recent defeats have been against sides that have pressed heavily – Tottenham Hotspur in the Champions League and Crystal Palace in the Premier League. City have lost to English teams in the Champions League for the past two seasons.
In Diego Maradona's heyday Napoli won the 1989 UEFA Cup, beating Stuttgart in the Final. But in the Champions League era they have only managed to reach the round of 16 twice, in 2012 (losing to Chelsea) and in 2017 (losing to eventual champions Real Madrid).	New...Kostas Manolas	As runners-up in Serie A, significantly behind Juventus (11 points) in a disappointing first campaign for Ancelotti, who failed to match his predecessor Sarri's achievements, with Napoli also falling short in their Champions and Europa League campaigns.	Napoli's summer search for a winger to give the attack new bite and width ended with the signing of Mexican winger Hirving Lozano from PSV for a club record €40m. Central defender Kostas Manolas also arrived, from Roma for €36m.
Olympiakos have been regulars in the Champions League group stage over the past two decades. Their best performance came in 199 when they lost to a late Juventus winner in the quarter-finals. They also reached the last 16 in 2008, 2010 and 2014.	Qualifying...beating Istanbul Basaksehir	As the 2019 Greek league runners-up to PAOK, Olympiakos entered the qualifying round, where victories over Viktoria Plzen, Istanbul Basaksehir and Krasnodar – 4-0, 3-0 and 6-1 on aggregate – took them into the group stage.	The long-term knee injury to key midfielder and skipper Kostas Fortounis has left Olympiakos dependent on veteran French midfielder Mathieu Valbuena to fill the creative void in midfield. Striker Yussef El Arabi scored crucial goals against Krasnodar in the qualifiers.
Have yet to reach a Champions League Final – in fact, they have yet to get past the quarter-finals and have gone out in the round of 16 for the past three seasons. Founded in 1970, their only European success has been the Cup-winners Cup in 1996.	Incoming... Pablo Sarabia	Runaway champions of France, but they failed to repeat the previous year's sweep of domestic trophies, losing to Guingamp in the League Cup quarters and to Rennes on penalties in the French Cup Final. Brazilian Leonardo returned as sporting director this summer.	Abdou Diallo (Borussia Dortmund), Pablo Sarabia (Sevilla) and Idrissa Gueye (Everton) were signed but the summer was dominated by Neymar's desire to leave the club. PSG insist they wanted the Brazilian to stay in Paris – but will they be better off without him?
Despite being despised by fans of other Bundesliga clubs, Leipzig defied the odds to qualify for the Champions League in their debut Bundesliga season in 2016-17. The subsequent European campaign ended with defeat to Marseille in the Europa League quarter-finals.	Young...Julian Nagelsmann	Third in the Bundesliga, with sporting director Ralph Rangnick stepping in as coach for the season. They continue to hoover up young talent and this summer they added Ademola Lookman (Everton), Ethan Ampadu (Chelsea, loan) and Christopher Nkunku (PSG).	Nagelsmann faces the huge task of turning Leipzig into a more flexible and fully rounded outfit, adding greater care in possession to the team's traditional virtues of pressing and speedy counter-attacks. Can he do that while also competing in the Champions League?

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

	STADIUM	COACH	OWNER
Real Madrid	Earlier this year, the club announced ambitious plans to construct a retractable roof on the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu. The development will also involve the construction of a hotel, restaurants and shops, although the 81,000 capacity will not be increased.	Zinedine Zidane returned to the club in March this year, eight-and-a-half months after the 47-year-old Frenchman quit following Madrid's May 2018 Champions League triumph, the club's third successive European crown, and their 13th in total.	In 2017 Florentino Perez was re-elected as club president until 2021. The 72-year-old businessman is in his second spell as president (the first ran from 2000 to 2006) and has overseen club revenues rise to record levels of €750.9million in 2017-18.
Red Bull Salzburg	Stadion Wals-Siezenheim, known as Red Bull Arena for sponsorship purposes, was re-developed for the 2008 European Championship, with the capacity increased to 30,000. Wals-Siezenheim is a suburb of Salzburg.	Jesse Marsch is the first American to take charge of a team in the Champions League, following his appointment this summer. The 45-year-old former USA midfielder has come through the Red Bull ranks, as assistant coach at New York Red Bulls and RB Leipzig.	The Red Bull energy drinks company controversially bought the Austria Salzburg club in 2005, re-naming it Red Bull Salzburg. There are close ties with the firm's Bundesliga club in Leipzig, though fans have been angered by Leipzig's signing of Salzburg players.
Red Star Belgrade	The 55,000-capacity Rajko Mitic Stadium is nicknamed Marakana because of the resemblance – with a round roof – to the famous venue in Rio. A Serbian army tank was recently placed outside the stadium, providing a controversial backdrop for fan photos.	Vladan Milojevic has been in charge since 2017, guiding them to two successive Serbian league titles over the past two seasons. The 49-year-old previously coached Red Star's youth team, Serbian club Cukaricki, Omonia in Cyprus and Greece's Panionios.	The club known as Crvena Zvezda (Serbian for Red Star) was founded in 1945 and owned for many years by the Yugoslav state. Recent funding from sponsor Gazprom has helped kickstart a revival, culminating in last season's return to the Champions League.
Shakhtar Donetsk	The war in eastern Ukraine has forced Shahktar to abandon the Donbass Arena, their futuristic 50,000-capacity arena in Donetsk. Initially they played games in Lviv but have since moved to the 40,000-seater Metalist Stadium in Kharkiv, 300km north of Donetsk.	Shakhtar gambled on Portuguese coach Luis Castro to replace Roma-bound Paolo Fonseca this summer. The 57-year-old, who has signed a two-year contract, has never coached outside of his native Portugal, or a team in the Champions League.	Oligarch Rinat Akhmetov is one of Ukraine's richest men and has single-handedly funded Shakhtar's rise in recent years. He made his fortune as a speculator in a number of industries, notably metals and mining, in the years following the collapse of the USSR.
Slavia Prague	The 21,000-capacity Eden Arena is known as the Sinobo Stadium for sponsorship purposes, having previously been the Synod Tip Arena. The new, modern stadium in Prague's Vrsovice district was opened in 2008 on the site of the club's old Eden ground.	Jindrich Trpisovsky delivered the Czech league and cup double in his first full season at Slavia, having previously coached Slovan Liberec and Viktoria Zizkov. The 43-year-old favours casual dress on the touchline, including a trademark baseball cap.	Chinese property development company Sinobo bought a majority stake in the club in 2018 and announced a plan to redevelop the club stadium, renaming it Sinobo Arena. Sinobo also own Chinese Super League club Beijing Sinobo Guoan.
Tottenham Hotspur	Worries that Spurs might struggle to adapt to their fantastic new 62,000-capacity stadium were dispelled by the invigorating run to last season's Champions League Final. The new home has cost in the region of £1billion and is bound to impact on their future spending.	Former Argentina defender Mauricio Pochettino has probably not got the credit he deserves for his achievements on a relative shoestring budget since he joined Spurs from Southampton in 2014. The 47-year-old signed a new five-year contract in summer 2018.	Daniel Levy has been chairman since 2001 when the English National Investment Company (ENIC), in which Levy and his family own a 29.4 per cent stake, bought the club. Bahamas-based businessman Joe Lewis owns the remaining 70 per cent.
Valencia	The 49,500-capacity Mestella has been Valencia's home since 1923. Construction on a new 80,000-capacity home began in 2007 but was mothballed after the club ran into financial problems. In April 2019 the club announced plans to resurrect the build.	Marcelino was close to the sack last season, with the club four points above La Liga's relegation zone at the halfway point. But the players rallied behind the 54-year-old former Villarreal boss and claimed the final Champions League spot, also winning the Copa del Rey.	Singapore billionaire Peter Lim completed his €100m takeover of the club in October 2014, becoming the first foreign owner in the club's history. Lim has since also purchased a 40 per cent stake in English League Two club Salford City.
Zenit	Saint Petersburg Arena, known for sponsorship purposes as Gazprom Arena, was built on the site of the club's former Kirov stadium, opening in 2017 for the Confederations Cup. Dubbed the "Spaceship", the venue on Krestovsky island in north-west Saint Petersburg, holds 67,000.	Zenit turned to former midfielder Sergei Semak to replace Roberto Mancini last summer. The 43-year-old returned to the club after earning his coaching spurs with Ufa, who he guided to promotion and then sixth place in Russia's top flight.	Energy company Gazprom took a controlling stake in the club in December 2005. In addition to investing heavily in players, Gazprom has also spent large sums of money on sponsoring Bundesliga club Schalke and the World Cup.

EUROPEAN PEDIGREE		HOW THEY QUALIFIED	TACTICAL TALKING POINT
The most successful club in European history, with 13 European titles, including five in a row from 1956 to 1960: a quintet of victories that confirmed the club's legendary status and helped to establish the European Cup as the modern game's most important competition.	Costly... Ferland Mendy	Third in La Liga, 19 points behind champions Barcelona and seven behind Atletico Madrid. In March, Zidane was re-appointed as coach, replacing interim boss Santiago Solari, who had stepped in when Julen Lopetegui was sacked in October 2018.	Real spent a hefty €203m on Eden Hazard, Luka Jovic, Ferland Mendy, Rodrygo and Eder Militao. They offloaded Marco Llorente (Atletico) and Dani Ceballos (Arsenal, loan) but failed to cash in on Gareth Bale and Isco. How can Zidane keep everyone happy?
Salzburg will be competing in the Champions League group stage for the first time, having previously failed to negotiate the qualifying rounds. They reached the Europa League semi-finals in 2017, losing to Marseille, and reached the round of 16 last season.	 Ground...Red Bull Arena	As champions of Austria for the sixth successive time, having won 10 out of the previous 13 titles. An improvement in Austria's UEFA club coefficient status – to 12th place – gained the country an automatic spot in the group stage for the first time.	Salzburg again lost key players this summer (Hannes Wolf to Leipzig, Munas Dabbour to Sevilla). Can the new signings – who include Slovenian forward Benjamin Sesko (Domzale, €2.5m) and Danish defender Rasmus Kristensen (Ajax, €5m) – step up?
European Cup winners in 1991, when they held out to beat Marseille on penalties in Bari, Red Star are the last European champions to hail from Eastern Europe and the only Serbian/former Yugoslav club to have lifted the famous trophy.	Joy...Young Boys are beaten	The Serbian champions did it the hard way, coming through four preliminary rounds. They overcame Lithuania's Sudova, HJK Helsinki of Finland and Danish champions Copenhagen before seeing off Swiss champions Young Boys in the play-off round.	Last season, Red Star beat Liverpool in Belgrade and drew 0-0 with Napoli, with the vociferous home crowd playing as much of a role as the team's tactical approach. Former Chelsea winger Marko Marin has been a key creative figure in Red Star's recent success.
Regular group-stage competitors in the Champions League since 2000, their best performance was reaching the 2005 quarter-finals, where they lost to Barcelona. Shakhtar were the last winners of the UEFA Cup, in 2009, before it was rebranded the Europa League.	Influential ...Viktor Kovalenko (left)	Champions of Ukraine for the third season running with striker Junior Moraes, signed from Dynamo Kiev, starring as the league's top scorer. Success, which also included the Ukraine Cup, was achieved despite their continued war-enforced exile from home city Donetsk.	Shakhtar continue to rely heavily on imported Brazilian talent, notably striker Junior Moraes, winger Marlon and veteran captain Taison. However, Ukraine international Viktor Kovalenko could be their most influential player in midfield.
UEFA Cup semi-finalists in 1996, when they lost to Zinedine Zidane's Bordeaux, Slavia have only competed in the Champions League group stage on one previous occasion. In 2008 they finished third despite losing 7-0 to Arsenal in one of their games.	Success... overcoming CFR Cluj	The Czech champions were narrow winners over Romanian champions CFR Cluj, who had beaten Celtic in the previous qualifying round. The secured a 1-0 win in both legs of the play-off to reach the group stage for only the third time in their history.	The summer signing of one-time Romanian starlet Nicolae Stanciu from Saudi Arabian side Al Ahli has given Slavia new creative options in midfield, where Tomas Soucek provides defensive solidity and winger Lukas Masopust can deliver the unexpected.
Tottenham were the first English club to win a European trophy, claiming the 1963 Cup-winners Cup. They added the UEFA Cup in 1972 and 1984 but they had to wait until 2019 for an appearance in the Champions League Final.	Record... Tanguy Ndombele	After finishing third in last season's Premier League, behind Manchester City and Liverpool. Alarmingly for Pochettino, their form nose-dived badly in the final few months of the campaign and they lost seven of their last 12 league games.	Record signing Tanguy Ndombele, who cost an initial £55m from Lyon, will certainly strengthen the Spurs midfield. But doubts remain over the future of Christian Eriksen and have highlighted a worrying issue of who will provide the side's creativity.
Valencia reached the Champions League in their first appearance in the competition but lost to Real Madrid in the 2000 Final. Since then they have made regular appearances in the group stage and won the 2004 UEFA Cup Final.	Rallied...Marcelino	Valencia grabbed Spain's final Champions League spot, having spent only six days of the Liga season in the top four. Their exceptional second half of the season culminated in victory over Barcelona in the Spanish Cup Final, their first trophy for 11 years.	Marcelino's rigid 4-4-2 system may not be particularly pretty but it has been highly effective. Playmaker Dani Parejo and Geoffrey Kondogbia form a strong central midfield partnership while Maxi Gomez, a €40m signing from Celta Vigo, will add dynamism to attack.
Zenit have been Champions League group-stage regulars in most seasons since 2008, the year of their greatest European triumph: the UEFA Cup Final, when midfielder Andrei Arshavin inspired a 2-0 win over Rangers at the City of Manchester Stadium.	Winger...Malcom	Russian champions for the fifth time. Veteran striker Artyom Dzyuba weighed in with crucial strikes, while Iranian international forward Sardar Azmoun added creativity and goals to the attack following a mid-season arrival from Rubin Kazan.	Can €40million Brazilian winger Malcom rebuild his career in Russia after a frustrating season at Barcelona following a summer 2018 transfer from Bordeaux? Defender Douglas Santos (Hamburg, €12m) has added to the Brazilian ties at the club.



Rematch...Cristiano Ronaldo of Juventus gets the better of Atletico Madrid's Kieran Trippier

Champions League draw

Group Stage

GROUP A

SEP 18	Club Brugge v Galatasaray
SEP 18	Paris Saint-Germain v Real Madrid
OCT 1	Real Madrid v Club Brugge
OCT 1	Galatasaray v Paris Saint-Germain
OCT 22	Club Brugge v Paris Saint-Germain
OCT 22	Galatasaray v Real Madrid
NOV 6	Paris Saint-Germain v Club Brugge
NOV 6	Real Madrid v Galatasaray
NOV 26	Galatasaray v Club Brugge
NOV 26	Real Madrid v Paris Saint-Germain
DEC 11	Club Brugge v Real Madrid
DEC 11	Paris Saint-Germain v Galatasaray

GROUP B

SEP 18	Olympiakos v Tottenham Hotspur
SEP 18	Bayern Munich v Red Star Belgrade
OCT 1	Tottenham Hotspur v Bayern Munich
OCT 1	Red Star Belgrade v Olympiakos
OCT 22	Tottenham Hotspur v Red Star Belgrade
OCT 22	Olympiakos v Bayern Munich
NOV 6	Red Star Belgrade v Tottenham Hotspur
NOV 6	Bayern Munich v Olympiakos
NOV 26	Tottenham Hotspur v Olympiakos
NOV 26	Red Star Belgrade v Bayern Munich
DEC 11	Bayern Munich v Tottenham Hotspur
DEC 11	Olympiakos v Red Star Belgrade

GROUP C

SEP 18	Shakhtar Donetsk v Manchester City
SEP 18	Dinamo Zagreb v Atalanta
OCT 1	Manchester City v Dinamo Zagreb
OCT 1	Atalanta v Shakhtar Donetsk
OCT 22	Manchester City v Atalanta
OCT 22	Shakhtar Donetsk v Dinamo Zagreb
NOV 6	Atalanta v Manchester City
NOV 6	Dinamo Zagreb v Shakhtar Donetsk
NOV 26	Manchester City v Shakhtar Donetsk
NOV 26	Atalanta v Dinamo Zagreb
DEC 11	Dinamo Zagreb v Manchester City
DEC 11	Shakhtar Donetsk v Atalanta

GROUP D

SEP 18	Atletico Madrid v Juventus
SEP 18	Bayer Leverkusen v Lokomotiv Moscow
OCT 1	Juventus v Bayer Leverkusen
OCT 1	Lokomotiv Moscow v Atletico Madrid
OCT 22	Atletico Madrid v Bayer Leverkusen
OCT 22	Juventus v Lokomotiv Moscow
NOV 6	Lokomotiv Moscow v Juventus
NOV 6	Bayer Leverkusen v Atletico Madrid
NOV 26	Lokomotiv Moscow v Bayer Leverkusen
NOV 26	Juventus v Atletico Madrid
DEC 11	Atletico Madrid v Lokomotiv Moscow
DEC 11	Bayer Leverkusen v Juventus

Closing game...Bayern Munich (in red) v Tottenham

GROUP E

SEP 17	Red Bull Salzburg v Genk
SEP 17	Napoli v Liverpool
OCT 2	Genk v Napoli
OCT 2	Liverpool v Red Bull Salzburg
OCT 23	Genk v Liverpool
OCT 23	Red Bull Salzburg v Napoli
NOV 5	Liverpool v Genk
NOV 5	Napoli v Red Bull Salzburg
NOV 27	Genk v Red Bull Salzburg
NOV 27	Liverpool v Napoli
DEC 10	Red Bull Salzburg v Liverpool
DEC 10	Napoli v Genk

GROUP F

SEP 17	Internazionale v Slavia Prague
SEP 17	Borussia Dortmund v Barcelona
OCT 2	Slavia Prague v Borussia Dortmund
OCT 2	Barcelona v Internazionale
OCT 23	Slavia Prague v Barcelona
OCT 23	Internazionale v Borussia Dortmund
NOV 5	Barcelona v Slavia Prague
NOV 5	Borussia Dortmund v Internazionale
NOV 27	Barcelona v Borussia Dortmund
NOV 27	Slavia Prague v Internazionale
DEC 10	Borussia Dortmund v Slavia Prague
DEC 10	Internazionale v Barcelona

GROUP G

SEP 17	Lyon v Zenit
SEP 17	Benfica v RB Leipzig
OCT 2	Zenit v Benfica
OCT 2	RB Leipzig v Lyon
OCT 23	RB Leipzig v Zenit
OCT 23	Benfica v Lyon
NOV 5	Zenit v RB Leipzig
NOV 5	Lyon v Benfica
NOV 27	Zenit v Lyon
NOV 27	RB Leipzig v Benfica
DEC 10	Benfica v Zenit
DEC 10	Lyon v RB Leipzig

GROUP H

SEP 17	Ajax v Lille
SEP 17	Chelsea v Valencia
OCT 2	Valencia v Ajax
OCT 2	Lille v Chelsea
OCT 23	Ajax v Chelsea
OCT 23	Lille v Valencia
NOV 5	Valencia v Lille
NOV 5	Chelsea v Ajax
NOV 27	Valencia v Chelsea
NOV 27	Lille v Ajax
DEC 10	Ajax v Valencia
DEC 10	Chelsea v Lille

Pos

10 to follow

Nick Bidwell picks out the players, teams and coaches to watch in Europe's second-tier competition

1 *The 'New Klopp'*

MARCO ROSE
(Borussia Monchengladbach)

You do not require razor-sharp sensory powers to detect the exhilaration crackling in the Gladbach air at the moment. The cause? The Bundesliga side's canny decision to hand the coaching joystick to Marco Rose, the much-vaunted ex-Red Bull Salzburg boss who has been dubbed the spiritual heir to Jurgen Klopp.

The Klopp comparisons are perfectly valid. A centre-back in his playing days, Rose played under Klopp at Mainz, where the pair developed a master and pupil relationship. Rose often talks about absorbing Klopp's people skills and both have the same core values: the attacking dynamism, feverish *gegenpressing* and full-on energy, aggression and boldness.

Not that Rose is entirely a Klopp "Mini-Me". One major difference is the weight he attaches to cultured build-up play. "We are looking for control in possession," he says. "But obviously not if it means falling asleep."

Rose and Gladbach look a good fit as far as Europe is concerned. The club regularly used to leave their mark in the old form of the competition, the UEFA Cup, winning it outright in 1975 and 1979, and finishing runners-up in 1973 and 1980. As for Rose, he took Salzburg to the Europa League semi-finals in 2018. That was the glorious season when Salzburg's list of supposedly superior scalps included Real Sociedad, Dortmund and Lazio.

Could they emulate the recent Europa League exploits of Eintracht Frankfurt, who last spring reached the semi-finals? With someone of Rose's calibre in charge, it has to be a possibility.

> "We are looking for control in possession. But obviously not if it means falling asleep"

Ultimately, much will depend on how quickly the Gladbach players learn the rather complicated Rose playbook. These past few years, the team has been anything but pressing-orientated. Such a revolution in choreography inevitably will take some time. "Things have to take root," skipper and central defender Matthias Ginter told Kicker magazine. "It needs a lot of work."

Another issue they have to fine tune is their all French strike-force of Alassane Plea – now in his second season at the club – and under-21 international Marcus Thuram, signed this summer from Breton outfit Guingamp for a bargain €9million. If they click as an ensemble, explosions should ensue.

Sadly, they will have to make do without attacking midfielder Jonas Hofmann for a while as he has been sent to hospital with damaged cruciate ligaments.

2 *The controversial appointment*

PAULO FONSECA (Roma)

Ostensibly new Roma coach Paulo Fonseca has one task and one task only in the current campaign: to achieve a top-four finish in Serie A, thus securing a Champions League berth for 2020-21. Accustomed to living it up in the top European bracket, the team were sixth last term, their worst classification in six years.

This was not what the club's American owners anticipated when they took over in 2011. Indeed, if Milan had not been banned from Europe for Financial Fairplay breaches, the *Giallorossi* would not have made the Europa League group-stage cut at all.

Some believe that Roma will not be particularly motivated to pull out all the stops in cross-frontier action over the next few months. But Fonseca has long held dreams of UEFA glory.

"I don't know when it will be, but one day I will be in the Final of a European Cup," declared the former Shakhtar Donetsk boss last year.

Fonseca loves to cross swords with the best and has fond memories of the time Shakhtar posed no end of strategic problems for Pep Guardiola's Manchester City in 2017.

The 46-year-old ex-central defender undoubtedly has a soft spot for the Europa League. It was in this competition in 2016 that he had one of those all-important eureka moments, reaping praise a plenty for his part in steering Portuguese outfit Braga to the quarter-finals.

The arrival of the tactically shrewd Fonseca – who has promised Roma fans a "courageous" team, one which "plays in the opposition half with a big defensive line" – is not the only grounds for optimism here. A number of excellent new recruits have come through the door, notably Atalanta centre-back Gianluca Mancini, Juventus left-back Leonardo Spinazzola, Guinean defensive midfielder Amadou Diawara from Napoli and the much-underrated ex-Espanyol and Real Betis keeper Pau Lopez. And in a further tonic for the troops, striker Edin Dzeko extended his contract.

> "I don't know when it will be, but one day I will be in the Final of a European Cup"

As ever, Roma's sporting outlook will be coloured by the mood of their fan base. Should results improve, the faithful will be happy. If they don't, cue more furious protests against the holders of the purse strings.

3 *The Main Contender From Outside The Premier League*

SEVILLA

Not only is transfer guru Monchi back, splashing out a whopping €150m on talent. The Andalusians also have a hungry new coach in ex-Spain and Real Madrid boss Julen Lopetegui.

4 *The Dark Horse*

WOLFSBURG

The VW outfit are on the up again after a barren spell. Expect new coach Oliver Glasner, formerly in charge of Austrian side LASK, to make them an even slicker attack-minded force.

5 *The Headliner*

BRUNO FERNANDES (Sporting)

Extraordinarily creative, the Portuguese international attacking midfielder was a hot tip to leave the Alvalade, only for a hefty price-tag to put off would-be buyers in the Premier League.

6 *The Goalscorer*

ZE LUIS (Porto)

Powerful Cape Verdean striker who has hit the ground running on quitting Spartak Moscow this summer for the Dragons.

7 *The debutants*

WOLFSBERGER

Austrian outfit Wolfsberger AC are taking part in the Europa League group phase for the first time, but that achievement will have to play second fiddle to nature.

Compelled to find another "home" venue after UEFA deemed the southerners' Lavanttal-Arena did not come up to scratch, WAC had hoped to relocate to the biggest stadium in the locale – the Worthersee Stadion in Klagenfurt.

The Worthersee, however, was already booked for all of September and October, hosting an avant-garde art and environmental-installation project which involves filling the ground with some 300 trees. As a result, Wolfsberger will now have to set up temporary residence in Graz, almost 80km away.

"We've just had a thrilling and rewarding year, finishing third in the league and qualifying for the Europa League" club president Dietmar Riegler told the fans. "This is something special for our club city and region. It's a once-in-a-century event. Unfortunately, we could not reach agreement with the organisers of the ForForest presentation. That means we have to switch to the Merkur Arena in Graz.

"I hope that together, we can all carry on travelling down the path we're on. It doesn't matter if it takes us to Wolfsberg, Klagenfurt, Graz or anywhere else in Europe."

A top-flight side since 2012, WAC exist on a miniscule budget and are bereft of star names. Yet they still managed to out-perform more prestigious sides such as Rapid Vienna, Austria Vienna and Sturm Graz last season.

WAC's biggest problem this term will be bedding in a new coach after Christian Ilzer was lured away by Austria Vienna and replaced by ex-Liefering boss Gerhard Struber.

Wolfsberger will rely on the inspiration of two veterans: attacking midfielder Michael Liendl and midfield anchor man Mario Leitgeb, who also offers an aerial threat from dead-balls. There are also high hopes for Israeli striker Shon Weissman, who arrived on a free from Maccabi Haifa. He has started the new Austrian league campaign in blistering fashion, netting seven goals in his first four games, including a quadruple in the 5-0 destruction of Mattersburg.

8 *The Revelation*

SELIM AMALLAH (Standard Liege)

Recently bought for a bargain €1.5m from Mouscron, the attacking midfielder swiftly has become a main man for Standard. Offers both technique and industry.

9 *Best Europa League Transfer Business*

JOAN JORDAN (Sevilla)

The outstanding Eibar central midfielder cost Sevilla just €14m this summer – which was €1m less than was being asked for in his release clause fee.

10 *Coach to Watch*

JULIEN STEPHAN (Rennes)

It speaks volumes about the tactical nous of the 38-year-old that he has twice beaten the mighty PSG in recent months in his side's penalty shoot-out victory in last season's French Cup Final and in Ligue 1 action early this term (2-1).

Europa League draw

Group Stage

GROUP A
Sevilla
APOEL
Qarabag
Dudelange

GROUP B
Dynamo Kiev
Copenhagen
Malmo
Lugano

GROUP C
Basle
Krasnodar
Getafe
Trabzonspor

GROUP D
Sporting Lisbon
PSV
Rosenborg
LASK Linz

GROUP E
Lazio
Celtic
Rennes
CFR Cluj

GROUP F
Arsenal
Eintracht Frankfurt
Standard Liege
Vitoria Guimaraes

GROUP G
Porto
Young Boys
Feyenoord
Rangers

GROUP H
CSKA Moscow
Ludogorets
Espanyol
Ferencvaros

GROUP I
Wolfsburg
Gent
Saint-Etienne
Oleksandriya

GROUP J
Roma
Borussia Monchengladbach
Istanbul Basaksehir
Wolfsberger

GROUP K
Besiktas
Braga
Wolverhampton Wanderers
Slovan Bratislava

GROUP L
Manchester United
Astana
Partizan Belgrade
AZ

Delight...Alfredo Morelos seals Rangers' group spot

Belief...Ferencvaros fans display a banner reading "never give up"

Euro adventure...Wolves' Raul Jimenez holds off Kevin Bonifazi of Torino

Glenn Moore

Real make their move

Madrid giants take over CD Tacon

The problem with being one of the world's great football clubs is that nothing can be done by half measures. There is a brand to protect and, as the PR industry's constant growth underlines, reputation management is a big deal these days.

This would have been one of the key considerations when Real Madrid were pondering whether to jump aboard the women's football bandwagon as it picked up steam over recent years.

When few people were interested, why bother? When there was no money to be made, why bother? Understandable, if not admirable, views.

Even when Real fan, former youth-team keeper and businessman Alfredo Ulloa founded Madrid CFF in 2010 – so his goalkeeping daughter Paola did not have to join Atletico Madrid – and clad the team in white as a "wink" to Florentino Perez, the Real president was not stirred into action.

But when Atletico can attract 60,000-plus to Wanda Metropolitano, Barcelona are able to reach the UEFA Women's Champions League Final and Spain's international women's team lead the front pages, maybe it is time to bother.

However, with a reputation to protect, Real were never going to start in the regional leagues. Instead, they bought CD Tacon, a newly promoted side who are based in the capital.

Tacon will retain their name this season, but they are under Real's auspices. Rene Ramos, brother and agent of Real captain Sergio, has joined the board and the team will play at Real's Valdebebas training ground, at the 6,000-capacity Estadio Alfredo Di Stefano. Next year they will formally become Real Madrid.

As with Manchester United, who began life last season with a fully professional squad, Real recognise that if they are to have a women's team they have to do it properly. The signings began with Sweden's 30-year-old forward Kosovare Asllani, who was a star of the recent World Cup and has experience in the USA (Chicago), France (Paris Saint-Germain) and England (Manchester City). Her international strike partner Sofia Jakobsson was next, followed by the Brazilian duo Daiane Limeira and Thaisa, experienced French defender Aurelie Kaci, Spanish goalkeeper Ana Valles and her midfield compatriot Ainoa Campo.

The latter switched from Madrid CFF and Real's arrival in the women's game must limit their possibilities. Ulloa once indicated that he had set the team up with a view to Real taking it over. But he now admits that, after the time and effort he has invested, surrendering the club would be hard.

Tacon's first match under Real's stewardship is away to Barcelona on September 8 and, while this cannot yet be described as *La Clasica Femenina*, a heavy defeat would be embarrassing.

Few expect Real to challenge for the title immediately, especially as their rivals have strengthened.

Champions Atletico signed English striker Toni Duggan from Barcelona, the Catalans replacing her with Norway's Caroline Graham Hansen from Wolfsburg. Equally significantly, Barca resisted Lyon's overtures to Lieke Martens, persuading the Dutch striker to extend her deal to 2022. They also brought Jennifer Hermoso back from Atletico and converted Asisat Oshoala's loan from Dalian Quanjian to a permanent move.

Besides Duggan, Atletico signed Dutch keeper Sari Van Veenendaal (Arsenal), who was the World Cup Golden Gloves winner, plus prolific Mexican striker Charlyn Corral (Levante) and Spanish midfielder Virginia Torrecilla (Montpellier).

Real's entry into the women's game means that Borussia Dortmund and Porto are now the only men's Champions League winners of the last three decades without a women's team.

According to the German club: "Borussia Dortmund has no women's football history. The departments are divided into men's football, women's handball, table tennis and a blind football team." Porto, meanwhile, run teams in basketball, boxing, roller hockey, handball and swimming, but not women's football.

In Italy, Internazionale – led by Regina Baresi, who is the nephew of Franco and daughter of Giuseppe – are now in the top flight, joining Juventus, Fiorentina, Milan and Roma, who made up last season's top four despite none having had a women's team prior to 2015.

Hoping to capitalise on the post-World Cup boom, the English season starts with

> "Borussia Dortmund has no women's football history. The departments are divided into men's football, women's handball, table tennis and a blind football team"

Spain top two...Atletico Madrid's Silvia Meseguer (left) and Vicky Losada of Barcelona

Promoted...Spurs' Gemma Davison (left) and Regina Baresi of Inter (below)

Title hopes... Dominique Bloodworth

a Manchester derby at the Etihad, while Stamford Bridge hosts Chelsea against newly promoted Tottenham Hotspur, who have signed winger Gemma Davison.

Reigning Women's Super League champions Arsenal have signed three players from Bayern Munich – Jill Roord, Manuela Zinsberger and Leonie Maier – and brought Jen Beattie back from Manchester City. However, Dutch defender Dominique Bloodworth has swapped one title holder for another and joined Wolfsburg. WS

League start dates

AUG 16	Germany	*(champions: Wolfsburg)*
AUG 23	Holland	*(champions: Twente)*
AUG 24	France	*(champions: Lyon)*
SEPT 7	England	*(champions: Arsenal)*
SEPT 8	Spain	*(champions: Atletico Madrid)*
SEPT 14	Italy	*(champions: Juventus)*
SEPT 15	Portugal	*(champions: Braga)*

Round -up

Going...Jill Ellis

WINNER ELLIS QUITS

Jill Ellis has decided to bow out at the top, stepping away from coaching the USA team after leading them to a second successive World Cup triumph.

Many had expected the 53-year-old to stay on for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games in order to rectify the team's 2016 failure, but Ellis says she will quit what she called the "rollercoaster"in October, at the conclusion of the Americans' five-match Victory Tour.

Ellis will stay with US Soccer for a year as an "ambassador".

SUNDHAGE TAKES OVER AS COACH OF BRAZIL

In a major coup that appears to signal belated serious support for the women's game, Brazil appointed Pia Sundhage as coach.

The 59-year-old, who won 2008 and 2012 Olympic gold with the USA, and silver with her native Sweden in 2016, will target Tokyo 2020 before embarking on overhauling an ageing side. Her two-year deal has an option to extend to the 2023 World Cup.

Super Cup role... Stephanie Frappart

FRAPPART MAKES HISTORY

Stephanie Frappart, the French referee who officiated in the Women's World Cup Final, became the first female to control a major European men's match when she took charge of the UEFA Super Cup between Liverpool and Chelsea in Turkey.

Compatriot Manuela Nicolosi and Ireland's Michelle O'Neill ran the lines.

BELL RINGS OFF

Colin Bell – the only English manager to have won the men's or women's Champions League when steering Frankfurt to the 2015 Women's UCL – left Ireland to become assistant head coach at men's Championship club Huddersfield Town.

Back...Mark Sampson

SAMPSON RETURNS

Mark Sampson, who led England to the semi-finals of World Cup 2015 and Euro 2017 before being deposed, is back in football, as first-team coach at men's League Two side Stevenage.

The Welshman was sacked following allegations of inappropriate behaviour in a previous coaching role, although the FA later settled an unfair-dismissal case out of court.

US ROW RUMBLES ON

The NWSL attracted large crowds in the wake of the US World Cup triumph and an extended sponsorship deal with Nike, but their pay dispute with US Soccer continues.

An open letter by new US Soccer president Carlos Cordeiro quoting selective financial statistics inflamed rather than calmed matters.

Groupama STADIUM
Groupama STADIUM
VILLE DE LYON
VILLE DE LYON
STADE DE LYON
21/04/19
UEFA
WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE

OL rule OK

Lyon are the undisputed dominant force in the European women's club game. Glenn Moore reports

The most dominant team in world sport is not rugby union's All Blacks, gridiron's New England Patriots or Europe's Ryder Cup golfers. Rather, it is the female footballers of Olympique Lyonnais. Should Gianni Infantino succeed in getting his Women's Club World Cup off the ground, there is no doubt who would start the hottest of hot favourites.

At home, Lyon's rule has been absolute for almost a decade. Of the last 200 matches that OL have played in Ligue 1 Feminine prior to this season – a run stretching back to 2010 – they have won 189, drawn nine and lost two, both to Paris Saint-Germain.

PSG are also the only team to beat Lyon in the Coupe de France in this period, in the 2018 Final, though Lyon did lose on penalties to Juvisy in 2011.

> "The perfect model of how to run a modern club"
> **Ada Hegerberg**

Dominating a national league is not that uncommon – Juventus' men have won the last eight Serie A titles – but sustaining hegemony over a continent is rare. Lyon, however, have won six of the last nine UEFA Women's Champions Leagues, including the last four in a row. During these four campaigns they have scored 139 goals and conceded just 16. They were last knocked out, by PSG, on away goals in 2014-15.

During this period, Lyon have been blessed with many great players, from the best of France in Louisa Necib, Amandine Henry and Wendie Renard, to outstanding foreign recruits such as Lotta Schelin, Dzsenifer Marozsan and Ada Hegerberg. But the person most responsible is a 70-year-old businessman Jean-Michel Aulas, who made his fortune in computer-software

systems and his name as a president of Olympique Lyonnais.

The presidents of French football clubs are often big personalities, running their clubs like fiefdoms, and Aulas is very much of the type. He has owned OL for more than three decades and the club is synonymous with him.

Newcomers to the women's game may suspect Aulas' investment is a response to PSG's financial hold on the French men's game but it long predates that. Lyon's men's team were in the middle of a seven-season title-winning streak when Aulas, at the suggestion of the city's politicians, took over the club in 2004. Having won five league titles in the 1990s they had developed financial problems. Aulas, who had often promoted women to senior positions in his companies, decided to not just rescue the club but to make it the best.

Inspiration came from his friend Louis Nicollin, the late owner of Montpellier and a similar larger-than-life president who had also taken over a local women's team which was in the process of winning back-to-back titles.

Aulas sought to make an immediate impact, taking advantage of a hiatus in the US professional scene to sign Hope Solo and Aly Wagner for cameos. The team moved towards a more professional set-up and within three years Lyon were French champions, a status they have not relinquished.

Having reached the top, Aulas set about ensuring they stay there with,

Big personality...Lyon owner Jean-Michel Aulas

2019-20 UEFA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

ROUND OF 32

Juventus (Ita) v Barcelona (Spa)
Hibernian (Sco) v Slavia Prague (CzR)
Spartak Subotica (Ser) v Atletico Madrid (Spa)
Braga (Por) v Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
Vllaznia (Alb) v Fortuna Hjorring (Den)
Chertanovo Moscow (Rus) v Glasgow City (Sco)
Ryazan-VDV (Rus) v Lyon (Fra)
Arsenal (Eng) v Fiorentina (Ita)
Kopparbergs/Goteborg (Swe) v Bayern Munich (Ger)
St Polten (Aut) v Twente (Hol)
Anderlecht (Blg) v BIIK Kazygurt (Kaz)
Breidablik (Ice) v Sparta Prague (CzR)
Mitrovica (Kos) v Wolfsburg (Ger)
Pitea (Swe) v Brondby (Den)
Lugano (Swi) v Manchester City (Eng)
Minsk (Bls) v Zurich (Swi)
First legs to be played Sep11 &12, second legs Sep 25 & 26

ROUND OF 16

First legs Oct 6 &17, second legs Oct 30 & 31

QUARTER-FINALS

First legs Mar 24 & 25, second legs Apr1 & 2

SEMI-FINALS

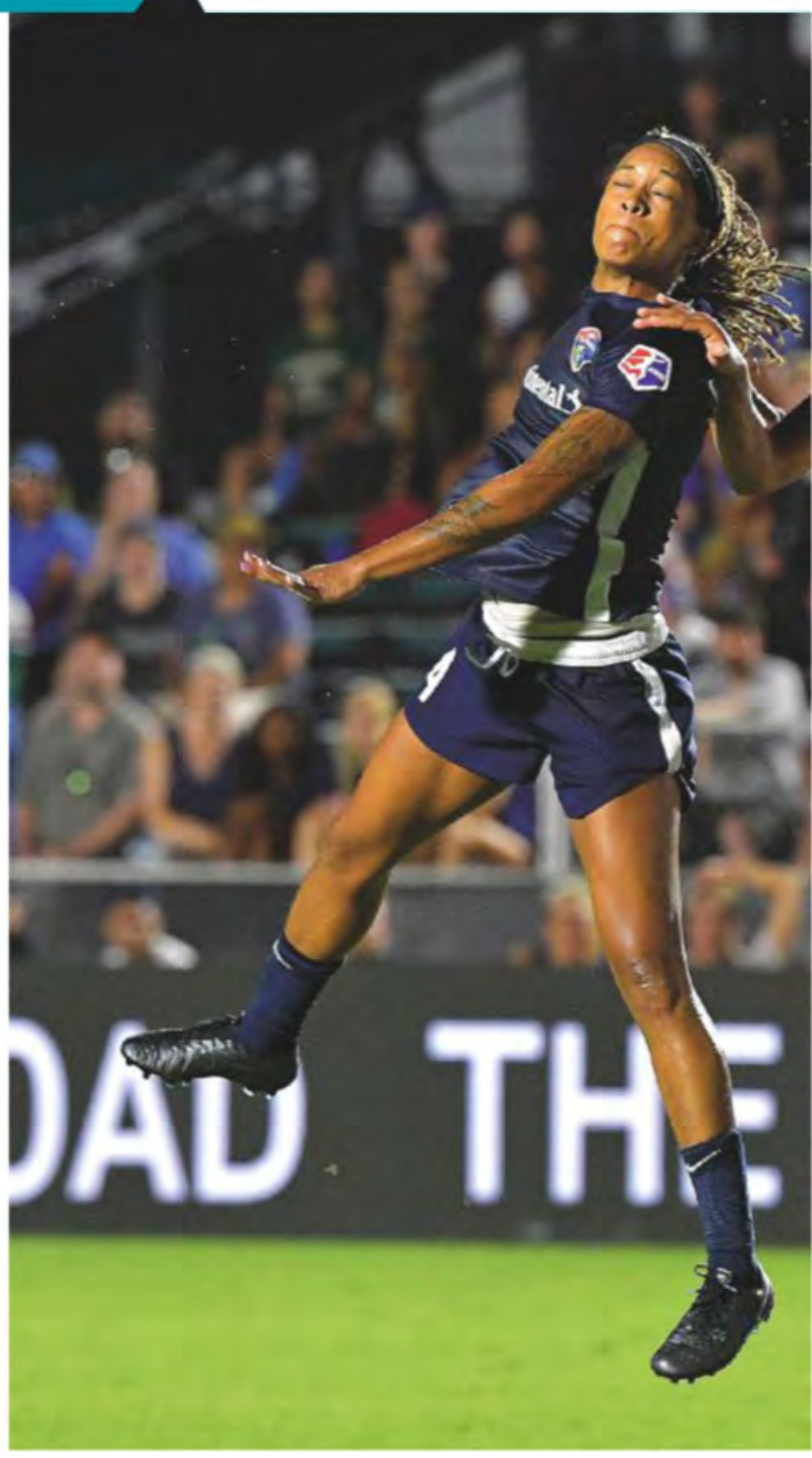
First legs Apr 25 & 26, second legs May 2 & 3

FINAL

May 24, Vienna

according to Reuters, an epiphany when he found himself wringing out wet shirts at half-time in a Champions League tie at Arsenal's Borehamwood ground in 2011. "Next time there will be a second set just like for the men, that's how it's going to work from now on," he said.

And so it has. Male and female players are treated alike. When Lyon reached the Champions League Final this year they flew by private plane and were met in Budapest by their team coach, which had been driven there from France. At the club they have similar or shared facilities. This is becoming the case elsewhere, such as at Manchester City, Chelsea and Arsenal, but Lyon were the first. They are,



Challenge...Lyon's Wendie Renard (centre) and Griedge Mbock Bathy in action against North Carolina Courage in the International Champions Cup

says Hegerberg, "the perfect model of how to run a modern club".

There is, of course, a huge disparity in salaries, but Lyon are very well paid by female standards. Ballon d'Or winner Hegerberg is thought to earn €400,000 a year, with Renard, Marozsan and Henry on more than €300,000. Regular starters such as Lucy Bronze are likely to be on €150,000-€200,000 a year – around twice what she would receive

EARLY MEETING FOR BIG GUNS

Barcelona v Juventus is the stand-out tie when the UEFA Women's Champions League gets underway. It is a draw that both whets the appetite but also hastens the arrival of a group stage.

With the 32 qualifiers thrown straight into a knockout, the current women's competition remains more of a throwback to the men's old European Cup than a female equivalent to the modern men's competition. Besides the knockout format, many "big name" clubs are afforded scant protection by the seeding system.

This creates mouth-watering ties, but can also mean an early exit for a major

Plum tie...Marta Torrejon of Barcelona

club. Last year Manchester City went out at this stage to Atletico Madrid while Juventus, on their European debut, lost to Brondby. The season before, Atletico lost to Wolfsburg and Chelsea put out Bayern Munich.

Juventus have been unlucky again this time in being paired with last year's runners-up. In another notable tie Arsenal, who were unseeded after five years out of Europe, meet Fiorentina. On form, Italy will have no representative in the last 16.

This is likely to increase the lobbying to UEFA for a group stage to be introduced. And with back-to-back semi-finalists Chelsea not even qualifying this time, more places for clubs from the bigger leagues will be sought. At present no country has more than two representatives.

Holders Lyon will be expected to ease past Ryazan-VDV even though the Russian champions, being mid-season, would hope to be sharper, although that seems unlikely after Lyon won 1-0 away to North Carolina Courage in the Women's International Champions Cup. Ostensibly a friendly, the result mattered and was impressive given NWSL champions Courage were mid-season and Lyon in pre-season.

Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern have tricky ties, against Sporting Braga and Kopparbergs/Goteborg respectively, but Wolfsburg (v Mitrovica), Manchester City (v Lugano) and Atletico (v Spartak Subotica) should have few problems.

The one surprise in qualifying was the exit of last season's quarter-finalists LSK Kvinner of Norway. They went out to Anderlecht, who now meet Kazahkstan's BIIK Kazygurt.

in England where a salary cap, based on club turnover, operates.

These figures strongly suggest Lyon women have been run at a loss but that may be changing. TV rights to Lyon's matches, sold for €200,000 in 2017, went for €1.2m this season, by far the biggest club TV deal in women's football.

The money is obviously one reason why few players say no to Lyon. So, too, the facilities. But just as attractive is the training environment. When US superstar Alex Morgan joined in 2017 she said the biggest lure was the prospect of training day-in, day-out with a squad of high-class internationals. "I want to be the best player in the United States...the best in the world," she explained.

Wales' Jess Fishlock, who was at Lyon last season on loan from Seattle-based Reign FC, says: "You have to be at your best every day in training or you get exposed. So you get better and better."

Although domestic games are often uncompetitive, even that has benefits, with Fishlock admitting: "It allows you to try things in a real competitive game. Then you have the confidence to take that into other games."

Rivals are threatening. Lyon needed penalties to beat Wolfsburg in the 2016 Final and PSG in the 2017 Final. In 2018 both Wolfsburg and Manchester City beat them in 90 minutes, if not in the tie overall. Last season Chelsea pushed them very close in the European semi-final. The London side's manager, Emma Hayes, proclaimed a "new era in women's football" arguing Lyon's domination is "massively challenged".

The response was that of restless, hungry champions. Lyon blew away Barcelona in the Final, taking a four-goal lead in barely half an hour with a Hegerberg hat-trick. Having also wrapped up the French double they then sacked coach Reynald Pedros. This seemed harsh, but Lyon are on a relentless quest for improvement. Jean-Luc Vasseur – previously a men's coach, including a spell in Ligue 1 with Reims – took over.

There was further recruitment on the field. Nikita Parris, England's Women's Footballer of the Year, arrived from Manchester City, followed by Alex Greenwood, Manchester United's captain. They will form an English quartet, with Bronze and Izzy Christiansen having previously joined from City. Belgian captain Janice Cayman also signed along with Portuguese forward Jessica Silva.

There was another notable signing, with 17-year-old Manon Revelli agreeing a three-year deal. Lyon can sign Europe's best, but they also develop their own with both genders treated equally at academy level. Revelli was one of four OL players involved as France won the European Under-19 title in July, with Melvine Malard finishing as the tournament's top scorer.

It will not be easy for youngsters or new signings to earn playing time at a club which had 16 players at the World Cup, but they will become better players.

Joining them was a "no brainer", says Parris, who adds: "I just want to be at the best place possible to ensure I really kick on in my career." Lyon, she added, were "irresistible, as they are the best". WS

KEY FIGURES AT LYON

JEAN-MICHEL AULAS
One of the most influential figures in French football, the computer-software tycoon became owner of Lyon in 1987. He added the women's team in 2004 and instituted new levels of professionalism akin to the men's game. The Groupama Stadium, which hosted the 2019 Women's World Cup Final, will be his physical legacy, but his impact on women's football is just as significant.

JEAN-LUC VASSEUR
Former midfielder with Paris Saint-Germain, Rennes and others, he became coach this summer. It is his first role in the women's game but he has previously led Ligue 1 side Reims.

ADA HEGERBERG
Crowned first winner of the Ballon D'Or Feminin in December, the 24-year-old striker joined Lyon from Turbine Potsdam as a teen in 2014 and has subsequently scored 193 goals in 165 matches. Quit her national team in 2017 in protest at what she feels is a lack of support for the women's game from the Norwegian federation.

WENDIE RENARD
Club captain and defensive rock who has been a mainstay for a dozen seasons. Born in the French Caribbean island of Martinique but moved to the mainland at 16 to join Lyon. Has won more than a century of caps for France.

SONIA BOMPASTER
Former Lyon and France midfielder who was appointed in 2013 to lead the club's female academy. Sharing facilities with Lyon's male equivalent, the academy regularly produces players for the first team.

Winner...Ada Hegerberg

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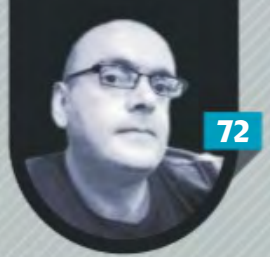
76 TIM VICKERY South America

71 STEVE MENARY Cook Islands

MARK GLEESON Africa

74

JOHN DUERDEN Asia



72

PLUS

72

Benched...Juve's Cristiano Ronaldo in South Korea

DIARY

70 Comprehensive global news

RESULTS, TABLES, FIXTURES

78 Club matches

79 Internationals

SQUADS

80 England: Premier League

76

Libertadores ...Palmeiras (in white) and Gremio

AUGUST 1-29, 2019

Global diary

A comprehensive record of recent events around the world

Victorious...Benfica lift the Portuguese Super Cup

Thursday August 1

ENGLAND: Arsenal sign Nicolas Pepe from Lille for a club record fee of £72m. Liverpool complete the sale of their Melwood training ground ahead of a move to a new £50m site in Kirkby in 2020.
EUROPA LEAGUE: Play is held up for more than 30 minutes before Universitatea Craiova beat Budapest Honved on penalties after referee Arnold Hunter is struck by an object thrown from the crowd in Romania.

Friday August 2

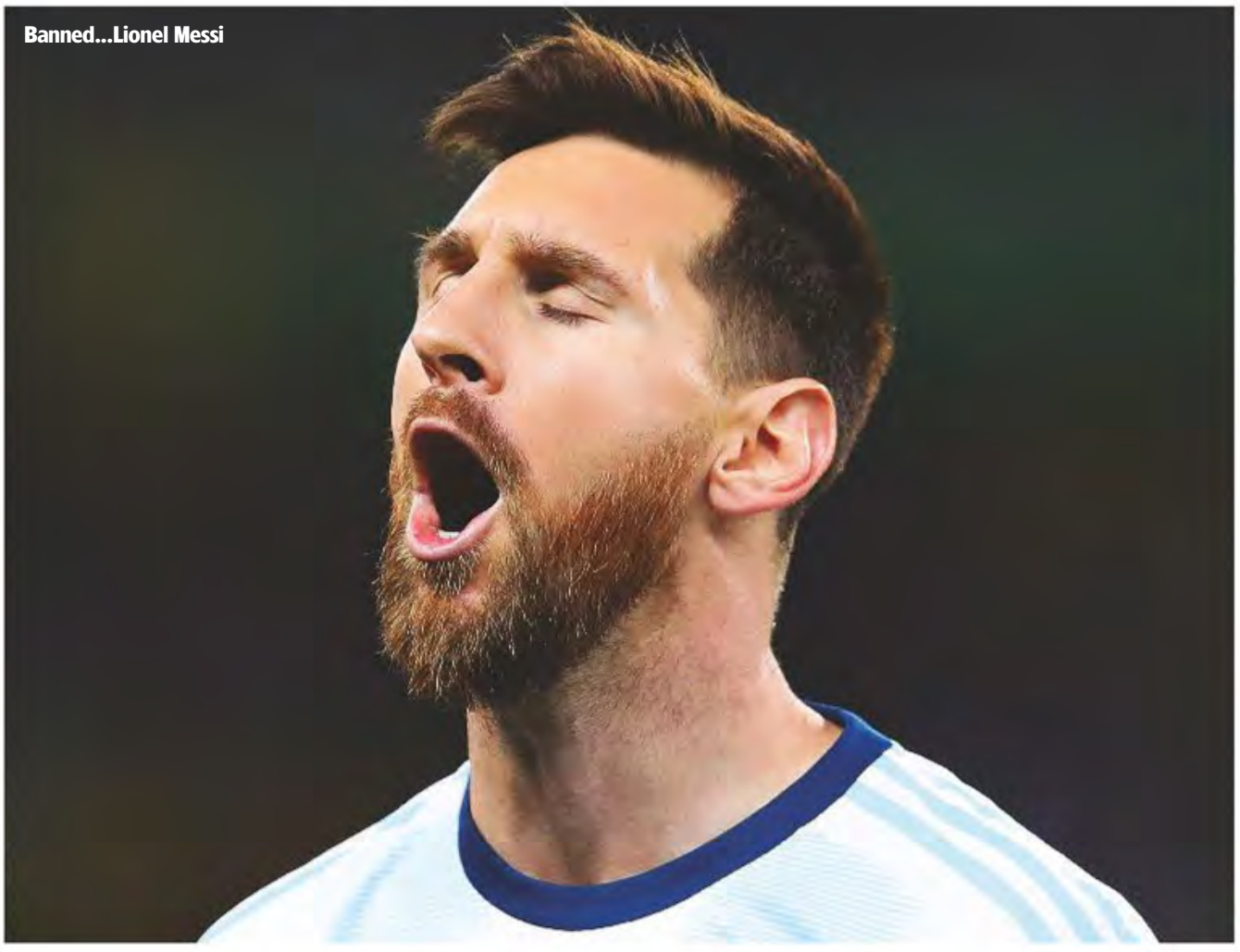
ENGLAND: Sheffield United break their transfer record for a fourth time this summer, signing Swansea City striker Oli McBurnie for £17m.
FRANCE: Vahid Halilhodzic resigns as coach of Nantes less than two weeks before the start of the new Ligue 1 season.
RUSSIA: Zenit pay Barcelona an initial €40m to make Brazilian winger Malcom the joint-most expensive signing of all time in Russian football.
UEFA: French referee Stephanie Frappart will be the first female to officiate a competitive men's match organised by UEFA when she takes charge of the Super Cup between Liverpool and Chelsea in Istanbul on August 14.

Saturday August 3

ARGENTINA: Lionel Messi is banned from international football for three months after claiming that this year's Copa America was "fixed for Brazil", who beat Argentina in the semi-finals.
FRANCE: Paris Saint-Germain beat Rennes 2-1 in China to win the Trophee des Champions for a record seventh consecutive season.
GERMANY: Paco Alcacer and Jadon Sancho are on target as Borussia Dortmund beat Bayern Munich 2-0 to win the German Super Cup.
SCOTLAND: Defending champions Celtic begin the new campaign with a 7-0 thrashing of St Johnstone.
SOUTH AFRICA: National under-17 boss Molefi Ntseki is appointed interim coach of the senior side the day after Stuart Baxter resigns.
TURKMENISTAN: Altyn Asyr make it five Super Cups in a row with a 2-0 victory over Kopetdag.
USA: An MLS record crowd of 72,548 watch Atlanta United beat LA Galaxy 3-0 at the Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

Sunday August 4

ENGLAND: Manchester City beat Liverpool on penalties to claim the Community Shield after a 1-1 draw in 90 minutes.
MEXICO: Andre-Pierre Gignac becomes the club's record scorer with his 105th goal as Tigres beat Pumas 1-0.
PORTUGAL: Benfica beat Sporting 5-0 to win the Portuguese Super Cup for a third time in four years.
SOUTH AFRICA: With clubs refusing to release players due to a clash with the start of the country's Premier Soccer League, South Africa suffer a shock 3-0 loss to visiting Lesotho and bow out of qualifying for the 2020 African Nations Championship.
USA: Ron Jans is named Cincinnati's third head coach of the season.


Banned...Lionel Messi

Monday August 5

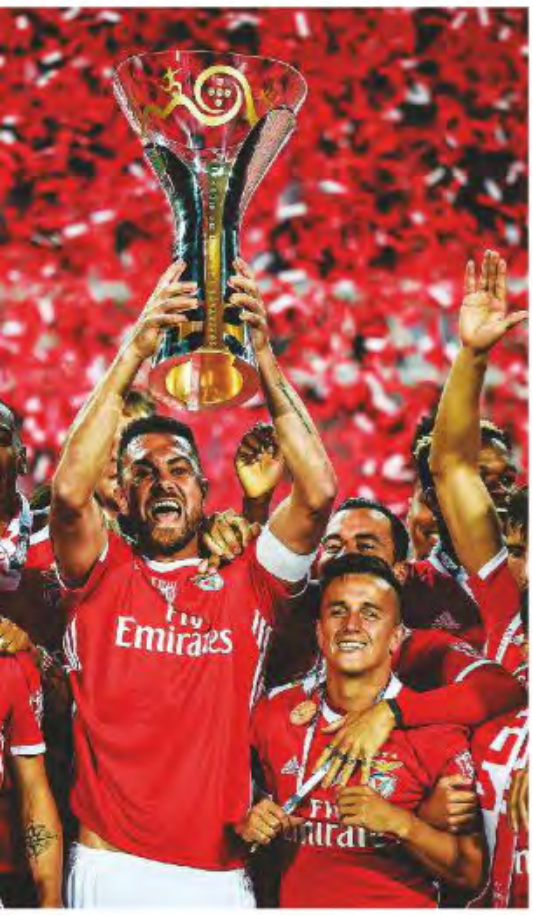
ENGLAND: Manchester United sign centre-back Harry Maguire from Leicester City for £80m – a world-record fee for a defender.

Tuesday August 6

AFC CHAMP LEAGUE: Bafetimbi Gomis celebrates his 34th birthday with a hat-trick as Al Hilal twice come from behind to beat fellow Saudi side Al Ahli 4-2 in the round-of-16 first-leg tie.
BRAZIL: Athletico Paranaense beat Shonan Bellmare 4-0 to become only the second Brazilian side to win the intercontinental J.League Cup/Copa Sudamericana Championship.
FRANCE: Lille pay a club record €16.5m to sign for Trabzonspor's attacking midfielder Yusuf Yazici.
INDONESIA: Trailing 1-0 from the away leg, PSM Makassar beat Persija Jakarta 2-0 in the return to win the Indonesian Cup Final.
USA: Wayne Rooney will leave DC United in December and join Derby County as a player-coach.

Wednesday August 7

AFC CUP: Hanoi become the first



Vietnamese side to win the AFC Cup ASEAN Zonal crown, beating local rivals Becamex Binh Duong 2-0 on aggregate in the Final.

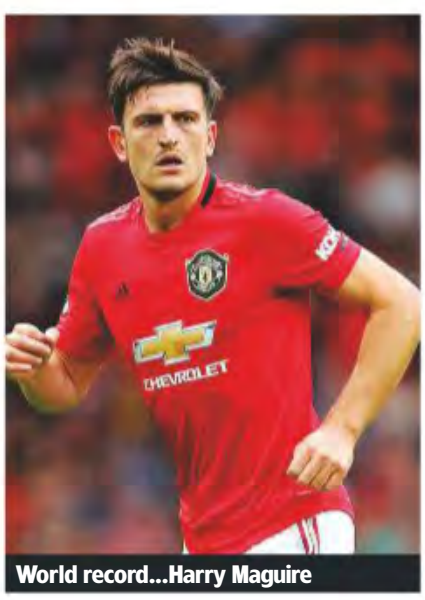
BRAZIL: Gabriel Jesus is banned from international matches for two months after being sent off in Brazil's Copa America Final victory over Peru for actions considered insulting and defamatory.

CAF CHAMP LEAGUE: Esperance are declared African Champions League winners after Wydad are deemed guilty of abandoning the second leg of the Final when they left the pitch after an equaliser was disallowed by VAR. Esperance were leading 1-0 in the second leg at the time and 2-1 overall.

DR CONGO: Having led the national side to three consecutive Africa Cup of Nations tournaments, Florent Ibenge quits as DR Congo coach after five years in charge.

Thursday August 8

CYPRUS: APOEL replace coach ➤



World record...Harry Maguire

Cook Islands

STEVE MENARY

Local...action from a domestic fixture

More games needed

OFC Nations League offers new hope for internationals

The Nations League concept has been enthusiastically adopted in Europe and the CONCACAF region, where previously inactive national teams are playing more regularly. And now the Oceania Football Confederation wants to join in.

If the plan works out, OFC Nations League games will be a huge boost for isolated Pacific countries such as the Cook Islands.

On 4 September 2015, the Cooks lost a decisive 2018 World Cup qualifier to American Samoa and missed out on a first-ever place in the second stage. After winning their first two games, against Tonga and Samoa, the loss was heartbreaking. Worse was that the Cooks have not played a single game since.

> "Of course it's detrimental to progression, but it's the reality of the situation for most of these Oceanian nations"
>
> Drew Sherman on a lack of international games

"I think it's disappointing for the playing group and of course detrimental to progression, but it's the reality of the situation for most of these Oceanian nations," says their ex-manager Drew Sherman, a Welshman who is now general manager at Melbourne Victory.

The Cooks can hardly just nip across the water to a neighbour for a friendly as the nearest FIFA member is Fiji, which is 2,354km away.

Sherman accepts that travel is not easy but believes that the lack of games is partly due to the Cook Islands FA (CIFA). He explains: "Ultimately, CIFA, as the governing body, have to make a decision on whether the investment into playing games is worthwhile and they don't feel that it is.

"Overcoming that mindset and trying to raise the level of professionalism was one of the hardest challenges I was faced with."

Sherman left after the qualifiers and was briefly replaced by Kevin Fallon – father of New Zealand international Rory – before another Briton, Jess Ibrom, took over as technical director.

Ibrom lived on Rarotonga for 21 months, during which time the male national team did not play a game. There was success at female junior level with qualification for the semi-finals of the OFC Under-16 Girls' Championship and this, says Ibrom, shows what can be done.

"We won back-to-back international fixtures for the first time. This was a result of six months of consistent planning and training," explains Ibrom.

"The senior team needs to play more regular fixtures and make sure they are involved in every up-and-coming tournament as this will result in greater buy-in.

"Like anywhere, it also comes down to the desire of people to drive it forward and keep players interested in the sport."

Ibrom's successor, Kevin McGreskin, arrived this April but the male footballers did not go to the Pacific Games in Samoa as their FIFA ranking was deemed too low by the national Olympic committee.

With any senior male internationals unlikely until the 2022 World Cup qualifiers next year, McGreskin is taking the national team to New Zealand for a training camp and four matches against local clubs. The Scotsman has also launched a global talent trawl to try and find more players.

His predecessors did the same and he is realistic about what he expects to find, admitting: "Some of the players playing overseas are not professionals and can drift away from football." WS

Asia

JOHN DUERDEN

Juventus win few friends in Korea

Ronaldo no-show upsets hosts

On the pitch, the highlight of the European pre-season in Asia was probably Harry Kane's last-minute halfway-line winner that showed Singapore fans that when you have paid top dollar for a ticket then staying until the end is a good idea. Off it, there were several contenders.

Manchester City left China with a stinging rebuke about their lack of engagement with the local media ringing in their ears – a big deal as it came from the state-run Xinhua News Agency. A little to the east, the only South Koreans seemingly not upset with Juventus are lawyers preparing for up to 10,000 lawsuits from fans seeking compensation from what became a messy affair.

While these commercial forays into Asia have become slicker over the years, there is still potential for slip-ups. The City criticism from China seems harsh; more the opinion of one miffed writer upset at a lack of access than an official proclamation on behalf of Beijing. It did, however, highlight the habit of European – and especially English – clubs coming to Asia and giving the travelling press preferential treatment over local news outlets. It has long rankled and seems a little counter-productive.

But when you are looking for new fans and revenue streams then Asia can't be ignored – though Juventus may wish they had never gone to Seoul. As things stand, the Italians will not be invited to return to the South Korean capital and other Asian megacities may think twice about a visit from a club that is, according to an unprecedented official statement from Korea's professional league, "shameless" and "arrogant".

The build-up to the July 26 clash between Juventus and a K-League All-Star side was all about Cristiano Ronaldo. The game was all about Ronaldo. The immediate aftermath was all about Ronaldo. But it soon became a clash of cultures.

It all started when the K-League gave The Fasta, a small marketing agency in Seoul, the rights to organise and promote the game. According to The Fasta, who released a copy of the contract, Ronaldo was guaranteed to play 45 minutes. Pre-game marketing was focused on the five-time Ballon d'Or winner and tickets that cost up to $330 were soon snapped up for what was likely to be a last chance to see the 34-year-old.

Anticipation...fans await the arrival of Ronaldo

> While commercial forays into Asia have become slicker over the years, there is still potential for slip-ups

Juventus arrived in Korea just a few hours before kick-off, cancelled a fan-signing session and arrived late at the stadium to delay the start by an hour. Ronaldo was on the bench for the first half and it was fully expected that he would appear after the break. He didn't, and as it became apparent that the white line would remain uncrossed some fans began to leave, while others chanted "Messi, Messi" and some booed.

Ronaldo left without saying anything to fans or the media, with the only comment from the club coming from coach Maurizio Sarri, who said that the player had "muscle fatigue". Back in Italy the next morning, Ronaldo's social-media post of himself on the treadmill saying it was good to be home did not win any of his old fans back, with one subsequent survey suggesting that 85 per cent of his fans were fans no longer.

It wasn't just the fact that Ronaldo did not play but the general attitude of Juve that upset the hosts, with no official explanation or apology for their actions.

The K-League wrote to Juventus in protest and received a reply from chairman Andrea Agnelli, who

Bench...Ronaldo (far left) did not play in the Seoul friendly

Highest level... Juventus supremo Andrea Agnelli

said that the club had performed all its duties at the highest level. This response caused the K-League to officially blast the club for its "blatant deception", accusing the Italians of including Ronaldo on the bench when there was never any intention to play him, for lying about taking almost two hours to get through the airport – when Korean immigration confirmed it took 26 minutes – and then setting off to the stadium late.

Fans have been upset by Juve's lack of remorse and explanation but there has also been plenty of criticism handed out to The Fasta for allowing itself to be pushed around. A lawyer working for one of the four firms that are representing fans said there could be as many as 10,000 lawsuits filed against the company. The Fasta, who have been advised to sue Juventus, have had their Seoul offices raided by police and their CEO, Robin Jang, has been banned from leaving the country.

But Juventus came out worse, perhaps due to a misunderstanding of Asian culture. When leaving a generous host upset and angry, apologies are needed to maintain harmonious relations. If that doesn't happen, the Serie A side – who may not have liked the fact that their Asians fans seemed more interested in Ronaldo than the club – risk the "arrogant" labels sticking permanently. WS

➤ Paolo Tramezzani with Thomas Doll two days after losing 2-1 at home to Qarabag of Azerbaijan in the Champions League qualifiers.
ENGLAND: The transfer window closes with Premier League clubs having spent £1.4billion.
ITALY: Internazionale pay a club record fee of €80m for Manchester United striker Romelu Lukaku.

Friday August 9

ENGLAND: Liverpool kick off the new Premier League campaign with four first-half goals as they beat newly promoted Norwich City 4-1.

Saturday August 10

ENGLAND: Manchester City begin their title defence with a 5-1 win at West Ham United.
FRANCE: Marseille lose 2-0 at home to Reims in Andre Villas-Boas' first game in charge.
PORTUGAL: Porto lose 2-1 at Gil Vicente in the opening round of league games.

Sunday August 11

CHINA: Elkeson becomes the all-time leading scorer in the Chinese Super League with his 103rd goal as top-of-the-table Guangzhou Evergrande win 3-1 at second-place Beijing Guoan.
ENGLAND: Chelsea suffer their heaviest-ever opening league game defeat as they lose 4-0 at Manchester United in Frank Lampard's first match in charge.
FRANCE: Neymar is absent as Paris Saint-Germain get their defence of the Ligue 1 title under way with a 3-0 win at home to Nimes.
GERMANY: Trailing 3-2 to Waldhof Mannheim in the German Cup, Ante Revic scores a 12-minute hat-trick as Eintract Frankfurt win 5-3.
USA: Josef Martinez is the first player to score in 10 MLS games in a row, getting both goals as Atlanta United beat New York City 2-1.

Monday August 12

SPAIN: Athletic Bilbao striker Inaki Williams signs one of the game's longest-ever deals, agreeing a nine-year contract with the club.
USA: USL side Orange County SC sign 14-year-old Francis Jacobs, making him the youngest-ever professional footballer in America.

Tuesday August 13

ENGLAND: Manchester City are fined 370,000 Swiss Francs (£315,000) but avoid a transfer ban after admitting they breached FIFA rules on signing youth players.
FRANCE: Marseille sack 2018 World Cup-winner Adil Rami after he skips training to take part in a TV reality show.

Wednesday August 14

FRANCE: Monaco complete the signing of Sevilla's Wissam Ben Yedder after paying the French striker's €40m release clause.
UEFA SUPER CUP: In the first-ever all-English clash, Liverpool beat Chelsea on penalties to win the title for a fourth time.
UKRAINE: Dynamo Kiev sack coach Alexander Khatskevich the day after they go out of the Champions League to Club Brugge.

Thursday August 15

CHINA: Guangzhou Evergrande are held to a 1-1 draw by Chongqing SWM and fail to set a new CSL record of 14 consecutive wins.
MOROCCO: Vahid Halilhodzic is appointed national coach.

Friday August 16

REP OF IRELAND: Bottom-of-the-league UCD are thrashed 10-1 away at Bohemians.
GERMANY: The new Bundesliga campaign begins with defending champion Bayern Munich drawing 2-2 at home to Hertha Berlin
SPAIN: Barcelona lose 1-0 at Athletic Bilbao in La Liga's opening game of the season.

Saturday August 17

HONDURAS: At least three people are killed in violence before Motagua's game against Olimpia.
TUNISIA: CS Sfaxien win the Tunisian Cup for a fifth time, beating Etoile du Sahel on penalties after a goalless draw.

Sunday August 18

CHINA: Brazilian-born striker Elkeson becomes the first player without Chinese heritage to be called up by the national side when named in Marcello Lippi's squad for September's Asian qualifiers.
EGYPT: Al Ahly sack coach Martin Lasarte the day after they are knocked out of the last-16 of the Egyptian Cup by Pyramids.
FRANCE: French champions Paris Saint-Germain suffer a shock 2-1 defeat at Rennes.

Monday August 19

GERMANY: Bayern Munich sign Brazilian attacking midfielder Philippe Coutinho on a season-long loan from Barcelona.
ITALY: Juventus reveal coach Maurizio Sarri is being treated for pneumonia, having missed ➤

➤ a friendly at the weekend with what was initially thought to be flu.

Tuesday August 20

EGYPT: The Bureau of the FIFA Council appoints a normalisation committee for the Egyptian Football Association after the resignation of the association president and the entire EFA board.
LIBERTADORES CUP: Palmeiras win 1-0 away to Gremio in the first leg of their quarter-final despite having Felipe Melo sent off.
SPAIN: Third-tier side Salamanca are to appoint former referee Marco Rodriguez – who officiated Brazil's 7-1 loss to Germany in the 2014 World Cup semi-finals – as their coach.
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Ten-man Ajax draw with APOEL, while Slavia Prague and Club Brugge win away at CFR Cluj and LASK respectively.
USA: MLS announces St Louis as a new expansion club, a move which will boost the league to 28 teams.

Wednesday August 21

ITALY: Fiorentina sign Franck Ribery following his release by Bayern Munich, where he won a record nine Bundesliga titles and the 2013 Champions League.
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC: Akademija Osh's Ilych Imanbekov is killed in a road accident while returning from a 3-1 defeat to Alay Osh, with other players suffering minor injuries.
LIBERTADORES CUP: Boca Juniors claim a 3-0 win away to LDU Quito, while Flamengo win 2-0 at home to Internacional in their quarter-final first legs.
QATAR: Al Sadd begin their defence of the Qatar Stars League title with a 4-1 victory at home to newly promoted Al Wakrah.
TUNISIA: National coach Alain Giresse has his contract ended by mutual consent.
TURKEY: Former Liverpool striker Daniel Sturridge signs a three-year deal with Trabzonspor.
UEFA CHAMP LEAGUE: Olympiakos and Dinamo Zagreb win at home, against Krasnodar and Rosenborg respectively, while Young Boys draw with Red Star Belgrade.

Thursday August 22

LIBERTADORES CUP: River Plate beat Cerro Porteno 2-0 with penalties by Ignacio Fernandez and Rafael Santos Borre.
SAUDI ARABIA: Abderrazak Hamdallahn scores for a 14th consecutive Saudi Pro League game as defending champions ➤

Africa

MARK GLEESON

CAS rules in favour of Esperance

Champions League Final farce is eventually resolved

Justice and common sense prevailed in the end as the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) ruled Esperance were the winners of the African Champions League at the conclusion of a tawdry affair that was just one of several crisis facing football on the continent.

The Tunisian club had been awarded the trophy and their medals after opponents Wydad of Morocco refused to play on after 59 minutes of the second leg of the Final.

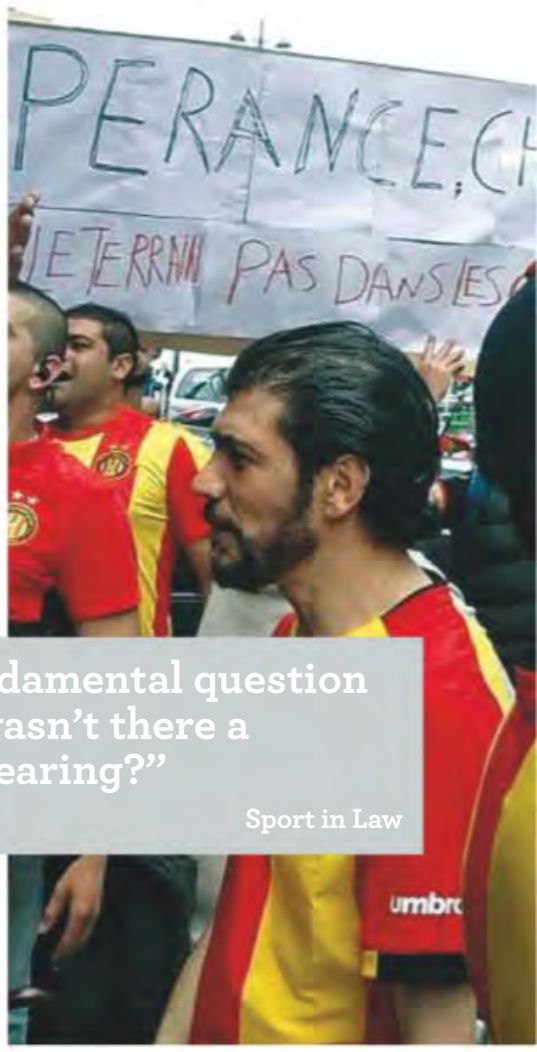
Wydad, then 2-1 behind on aggregate, had scored what they thought was an equaliser but it was ruled offside. They sought relief from the Video Assistant Referee system, which the Confederation of African Football (CAF) had brought in for the two legs of the Final. But on being told it was not working, they refused to continue playing.

Two hours of squabbling pitchside in Tunis, including CAF president Ahmad coming down from his VIP box to intervene, did not solve the problem and eventually referee Bakary Gassama blew his whistle and Esperance were handed a walkover.

However, just a matter of days later, the CAF executive committee ruled otherwise. "The playing and security conditions were not met during the second leg, preventing the match from reaching its conclusion," it concluded. "As a result, the match will have to be replayed at a ground outside of Tunisia and Esperance will have to the give trophy back."

It was a bizarre decision that said everything about the strong Moroccan influence in CAF's corridors of power at the height of a crisis in the organisation's leadership.

Both clubs immediately appealed the decision to CAS, who found after a two-day hearing in Lausanne that not only did CAF's executive not have the right to make the decision but that Wydad's assertion they be handed victory, or alternatively just one match be played on neutral venue – thereby



"The fundamental question is: why wasn't there a proper hearing?"
Sport in Law

Displeasure ...Esperance fans protest

Abandoned...the game in Tunis is called off

annulling the 1-1 draw in Casablanca in the first leg – was a load of nonsense.

Instead, CAS told CAF to send the matter to its own disciplinary committee, who promptly confirmed Esperance as winners but let Wydad off with just a $50,000 fine.

CAF's executive committee were pilloried in a subsequent review of the case by Law in Sport, which wrote: "There are obvious difficulties with the decision of the CAF executive committee to overrule the referee's decision to award the match to Esperance and order a replay of the abandoned match.

"But the more fundamental question is: why wasn't there a proper hearing?

"There were clear disputes of fact, there were arguments about the rules that apply and about the nature of the relevant rules. A just decision could only conceivably be made after these aspects were properly canvassed before a properly equipped independent body."

Ordinarily the entire incident would be the cause of much embarrassment. But CAF is already embroiled in a much deeper quagmire over the corruption allegations against Ahmad, who remains in charge despite the takeover of the running of the organisation by FIFA. WS

Farce...Esperance were initially handed the trophy

➤ Al Nassr begin the season with a 2-0 win against promoted Damac.
SUDAMERICANA CUP: The quarter-final first leg between Corinthians and Fluminense ends goalless.

Friday August 23

BELGIUM: Relinquishing his managerial duties on match days to concentrate on playing appears to have no immediate benefit as Vincent Kompany's Anderlecht lose again, 1-0 away to Genk.
CAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Al Ahly of Egypt thrash South Sudan's Atlabara 9-0 to triumph 13-0 over two legs and equal the competition's record aggregate winning margin.
SWEDEN: Henrik Larsson quits as manager of Helsingborg, with the club saying he had been subjected to verbal abuse that made his situation "unsustainable".

Saturday August 24

CHILE: Esteban Paredes equals Francisco Valdes' record of 215 goals in the Chilean top flight as Colo Colo draw 2-2 with Palestino.
ENGLAND: After three games, Liverpool are the only side with a 100 per cent record in the Premier League as they beat Arsenal 3-1.
GERMANY: Robert Lewandowski scores a hat-trick as Bayern Munich get their first victory of the season, beating Schalke 3-0.
ITALY: Aaron Ramsey fails to make the matchday squad and Matthijs De Ligt is an unused substitute as Juventus begin their Serie A title defence with a 1-0 win at Parma.
PORTUGAL: Jose Luis and Moussa Marega are on target as Porto beat Benfica 2-0.

Sunday August 25

BURKINA FASO: New national coach Kamou Malo drops his own son, defender Patrick Malo, from the 27-man squad for September's international games.
CAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: UD Songo of Mozambica beat Simba of Tanzania on away goals after forcing a 1-1 draw in the second leg of their preliminary-round tie.
ECUADOR: Macara beat Emelec 2-1 and become the first team to qualify for the end-of-season play-offs.
SPAIN: At 16 years 298 days, Ansu Fati becomes the second-youngest player in Barcelona's history when he comes on as a second-half sub in a 5-2 victory over Real Betis.
USA: Robin Fraser replaces interim Conor Casey as Colorado Rapids ➤

➤ coach. Zlatan Ibrahimovic scores twice as LA Galaxy draw 3-3 with Los Angeles FC.

Monday August 26

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr come from behind to beat Al Sadd of Qatar 2-1 in their home leg of the quarter-finals.
FRANCE: Jim Ratcliffe, Britain's third richest man, buys Ligue 1 club Nice.
ITALY: Romelu Lukaku scores on his Serie A debut as Internazionale beat 10-man Lecce 4-0.
NEW ZEALAND: Having coached Eastern Suburbs to their maiden league title, Danny Hay is put in charge of the national side.

Tuesday August 27

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: The first-ever all-Saudi quarter-final in the tournament's history ends goalless as Al Ittihad and Al Hilal play out a 0-0 draw. Hulk scores two penalties as Shanghai SIPG are held to a 2-2 draw by Urawa Red Diamonds.
ENGLAND: Founded in 1885 and twice FA Cup winners, League One side Bury are expelled from the Football League.
MEXICO: Veracruz set an unwanted world record as they lose 5-0 to Queretaro in the Apertura to extend their winless run to 33 games.
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Red Star, Olympiakos and Dinamo Zagreb qualify for the group stage.
USA: Atlanta United win the Open Cup, beating Minnesota United 2-1.

Wednesday August 28

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Two-time winners Guangzhou Evergrande are held to a 0-0 draw at home by reigning champions Kashima Antlers.
FRANCE: The derby between Nice and Marseille, which OM eventually win 2-1, is suspended for 10 minutes following homophobic chants from a section of the crowd.
MOROCCO: Seven spectators watching an amateur game in Tizert are killed when a flash flood sweeps across the pitch in the southern Moroccan village.
PARAGUAY: Former CONMEBOL president Nicolas Leoz, who had been under house arrest fighting extradition to the USA over alleged bribery and money laundering, dies at the age of 90.

Thursday August 29

ITALY: Manchester United striker Alexis Sanchez joins Internazionale on loan for the season. WS

Libertadores Cup

TIM VICKERY

Familiar feel to the final four

River and Boca prepare to meet again

Is there a new age of continuity in the Libertadores Cup? No one has retained the title since the start of the century, but Brazil's Gremio and River Plate of Argentina have reached the semi-finals for the third consecutive year, while River will now replay last year's Final against arch-rivals Boca Juniors – this time with a place in the Final at stake.

The only newcomers to the last four are 1981 champions Flamengo of Brazil, a giant club that has been punching below its weight for years but is now sufficiently organised to compete for the title. Even so, in the first knockout round they needed a penalty shoot-out to get past Emelec of Ecuador – a dramatic illustration of the fiercely competitive nature of the Libertadores.

Even so, there is no denying the trend. Since the tournament was lengthened in 2017 – from six months to a year – Brazilian and Argentinian teams have been given more slots and are exerting near total domination. For the second straight year the big two provide all four of the semi-finalists.

Of the 16 teams that went into the knockout stage, Brazil had six and Argentina had four. Three other countries were involved – Paraguay with three teams, Ecuador with two and Uruguay with one.

Nacional, the Uruguayan representatives, fell to Internacional of Brazil, whose Porto Alegre rivals Gremio easily saw off Libertad of Paraguay. Olimpia of Paraguay lost to Ecuador's LDU Quito, whose compatriots Emelec pushed Flamengo all the way before losing that shoot-out.

The round contained a single success for the lesser nations against the big two. Backed by fanatical support and striving to win the competition at their 40th attempt, Paraguay's Cerro Porteno came from behind to eliminate Argentina's San Lorenzo.

Argentina, meanwhile, had the better of the three clashes against Brazilian opposition. True, Palmeiras beat Godoy Cruz 6-2, but they were pushed harder than they might have expected. Boca Juniors had been thrashed by Athletico Paranaense in the group phase, but when they met again Boca won comfortably, having picked up momentum throughout the knockout phase. And reigning champions River Plate overcame Cruzeiro – though it took a tense shoot-out after two goalless draws.

And so the quarter-finals threw up one all-Brazilian

Success...Boca celebrate Emanuel Reynoso's goal against LDU Quito

Aerial threat...River Plate's Robert Rojas gets above team-mate and Juan Saiz of Cerro Porteno

half of the draw, with the Boca-River duo challenged by the upstarts in the other half.

Palmeiras appeared to have seen off Gremio when tight defence and a superb Gustavo Scarpa free-kick gave them a 1-0 win in the away leg. And the advantage was quickly doubled when new signing Luiz Adriano fired them ahead in Sao Paulo. But they surprisingly switched off, allowing Copa America hero Everton to fire in a volley and then charge through the heart of the defence and set up Alisson for the vital second away goal. Palmeiras coach Luiz Felipe Scolari handled his substitutions badly and Gremio held on with surprising ease in the second half.

In what promises to be a highly attractive clash, they now meet Flamengo, who are playing some swashbuckling stuff under recently appointed Portuguese coach Jorge Jesus. They knocked out Internacional, whose attempt to play out a goalless draw in Rio got what it deserved when Bruno Henrique scored two late goals.

Back in Porto Alegre Inter's approach was frankly bizarre. First they deprived themselves of any attacking pace and wasted much of the game, and then, a goal up, they charged forward in reckless fashion with over 10 minutes available and were easily picked off on the break.

Finish...Gabriel of Flamengo beats Internacional keeper Marcelo Lomba

River will replay last year's Final against arch-rivals Boca Juniors – this time with a place in the Final at stake

In a triumph for coach Gustavo Alfaro, Boca made easy work of LDU, planning the game at the altitude of Quito to perfection. With Alexis MacAllister shining in midfield and Ramon Abila a willing centre-forward, a 3-0 win effectively defined matters and Boca played out a dull 0-0 draw in the home leg.

River Plate, meanwhile, had to break sweat to get past Cerro Porteno. River flowed sweetly at home, but once again failed to score the goals threatened by their approach play and they needed a pair of penalties to win 2-0. They prepared themselves for an aerial barrage in Paraguay, and when veteran striker Nelson Haedo Valdez glanced Cerro into an early lead an upset appeared a genuine possibility. However, Marcelo Gallardo's men came out after the break determined to pay more attention to the second ball, and Uruguayan attacking midfielder Nico De La Cruz made sure of their semi-final spot with a stunning strike.

In a clear attempt to unsettle River, De La Cruz was arrested by the local police the day before – ostensibly because of an incident three years earlier in the Under-20 Libertadores. Scoring the goal, then, was sweet revenge. But in the build up to the semis it will be Boca Juniors who are fixating on revenge. WS

Club football

AFRICA

CAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

2018-19
Final
1st leg

May 24
Wydad Casablanca (Mor) 1 (Comara 79)
Esperance Tunis (Tun) 1 (Coulibaly 44)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Grisha (Egy)
Wydad: Tagnaouti - Noussir, Dari, Comara, El Amloud (Gaddarine 77), Ounajem, Saidi, Nekkach, El Haddad, El Karti (Jabrane 63), Babatunde (El Hassouni 62). *Sent off: Nekkach 49.*
Esperance: Ben Cherifia - Derbali, Dhaouadi, Chemmam, Ben Mohamed, Kom (Bguir 87), Coulibaly, Badri, Chaalali, Belaili (Elhouni 90+5), Lokosa (Khenissi 88).

2nd leg

May 31
Esperance Tunis 1 (Belaili 41)
Wydad Casablanca 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Gassama (Gam)
● *Match abandoned when Wydad Casablanca refused to play on after they had a goal ruled out for offside in the 59th minute; CAF ruled on Aug 7 that Wydad are 'considered to have lost the game in the Final 2nd leg', making Esperance champions (ruling subject to appeal)*
Esperance: Jridi - Derbali, Yacoubi, Chemmam, Ben Mohamed, Coulibaly, Kom, Badri, Bguir, Belaili (Elhouni 61), Khenissi.
Wydad: Tagnaouti - Noussir, Nahiri, Comara, El Amloud, Saidi, El Haddad, El Karti, Jabrane, Aouk, El Hassouni.

2019-20
Preliminary round
1st legs - Aug 9-16; 2nd legs - Aug 23-25
African Stars (Nam) v KCCA (Uga) 3-2, 0-2 (agg 3-4); Aigle Noir (Brd) v Gor Mahia (Ken) 0-0, 1-5 (agg 1-5); AS Otoho (Con) v Mamelodi Sundowns (SAf) 2-1, 0-4 (agg 2-5); Atlabara (SSu) v Al Ahly (Egy) 0-4, 0-9 (agg 0-13); Big Bullets (Mwi) v FC Platinum (Zim) 0-0, 2-3 (agg 2-3); Brikama United (Gam) v Raja Casablanca (Mor) 3-3, 0-4 (agg 3-7); Buffles (Ben) v ASC Kara (Tog) 1-1, 0-1 (agg 1-2); Cano Sport (EqG) v Mekelle 70 Enderta (Eth) 2-1, 1-1 (agg 3-2); Cercle Mberi (Gab) v Elect Sport (Chd) 0-0, 0-2 (agg 0-2); Dekedaha (Som) v Zamalek (Egy) 0-7, 0-6 (agg 0-13); Fomboni (Com) v Cote d'Or (Sey) 2-2, 1-1 (agg 3-3, Cote d'Or on away goals); Fosa Juniors (Mad) v Pamplemousses (Mrs) 1-0, 1-1 (agg 2-1); Green Eagles (Zam) v Orlando Pirates (SAf) 1-0, 1-1 (agg 2-1); Green Mamba (Esw) v Zesco United (Zam) 0-2, 0-1 (agg 0-3); Hafia (Gui) v Etoile Sahel (Tun) 2-1, 1-7 (agg 3-8); JS Kabylie (Alg) v Al Merreikh (Sud) 1-0, 2-3 (agg 3-3, JS Kabylie on away goals); Kano Pillars (Nga) v Asante Kotoko (Gha) 3-2, 0-2 (agg 3-4); KMKM (Zan) v Primeiro Agosto (Ang) 0-2, 0-2 (agg 0-4); LPRC Oilers (Lbr) v Generation Foot (Sen) 1-0, 0-3 (agg 1-3); Matlama (Les) v Petro Atletico (Ang) 0-2, 0-2 (agg 0-4); Rahimo (BuF) v Enyimba (Nga) 1-0, 0-5 (agg 1-5); Rayon Sports (Rwa) v Al Hilal (Sud) 1-1, 0-0 (agg 1-1, Al Hilal on away goals); SO de l'Armee (IvC) v Nouadhibou (Mra) 0-0, 0-1 (agg 0-1); Sonidep (Ngr) v USM Alger (Alg) 1-2, 1-3 (agg 2-5); Stade Malien (Mli) v Horoya (Gui) 1-1, 0-1 (agg 1-2); Tempete Mocaf (CAR) v Al Nasr (Lby) 1-0, 1-3 (agg 2-3); UMS de Loum (Cam) v AS Vita (DRC) 0-0, 0-1 (agg 0-1); Uniao Songo (Moz) v Simba (Tan) 0-0, 1-1 (agg 1-1, Uniao Songo on away goals); Young Africans (Tan) v Township Rollers (Bot) 1-1, 1-0 (agg 2-1)

CONFEDERATION CUP

Preliminary round
1st legs - Aug 9-12; 2nd legs - Aug 23-25
Akonangui (EqG) v Ashanti Gold (Gha) 1-1, 0-3 (agg 1-4); Arta/Solar7 (Dji) v Al Khartoum (Sud) 1-1, 0-3 (agg 1-4); AS Kigali (Rwa) v KMC (Tan) 0-0, 2-1 (agg 2-1); AS Pelican (Gab) v AS Maniema Union (DRC) 1-1, 1-1 (agg 2-2, AS Pelican 4-1 on pens); ASC Snim (Mra) v ESAE (Ben) 0-5, 0-2 (agg 0-7); Bandari (Ken) v Al Ahly Shendi (Sud) 0-0, 1-1 (agg 1-1, Bandari on away goals); Ben Guerdane (Tun) v Amarat United (SSu) 5-1, 0-0 (agg 5-1); Bolton City (Mrs) v Jwaneng Galaxy (Bot) 3-1, 0-1 (agg 3-2); Buildcon (Zam) v Young Buffaloes (Esw) 0-1, 1-1 (agg 1-2); CR Belouizdad (Alg) v Coton Tchad (Chd) 2-0, 2-0 (agg 4-0); DC Motema Pembe (DRC) v Stade Renard de Melong (Cam) 2-0, 2-0 (agg 4-0); Fasil Kenema (Eth) v Azam (Tan) 1-0, 1-3 (agg 2-3); Maranatha (Tog) v LISCR (Lbr) 3-0, 0-0 (agg 3-0); Mogadishu City (Som) v Malindi (Zan) 0-0, 0-1 (agg 0-1); Niger Tornadoes (Nga) v Santoba (Gui) 1-2, 3-3 (agg 4-5); Paradou AC (Alg) v CI Kamsar (Gui) 3-0, 0-1 (agg 3-1); Proline (Uga) v Masters Security (Mwi) 3-0, 0-0 (agg 3-0); Pyramids (Egy) v Etoile du Congo (Con) 4-1, 1-0 (agg 5-1); Triangle United (Zim) v Rukinzo (Brd) 5-0, 0-0 (agg 5-0); TS Galaxy (SAf) v Saint Louis Suns United (Sey) 1-0, 1-0 (agg 2-0); USGN (Ngr) v Al Ittihad (Lby) 1-1, 0-2 (agg 1-3)

CHAD

2019 Championship Final
Jun 25: Elect Sport 4 Coton Tchad 0.

EGYPT

2018-19 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ahly (C)	34	25	5	4	56	20	80
Zamalek	34	21	9	4	65	31	72
Pyramids	34	19	13	2	61	31	70
Al Masry	34	12	16	6	45	38	52
Al Mokawloon	34	13	9	12	45	38	48
Misr El Makasa	34	12	10	12	34	36	46
Ismaily	34	10	13	11	30	36	43
Al Gaish	34	10	11	13	41	39	41
ENPPI	34	9	13	12	39	42	40
Wadi Degla	34	10	10	14	41	47	40
Al Ittihad	34	9	12	13	41	56	39
Haras Hodoud	34	8	14	12	30	37	38
Entag Harby	34	8	14	12	36	44	38
Smouha	34	8	14	12	33	41	38
El Gouna	34	8	14	12	38	52	38
Petrojet (R)	34	8	11	15	30	43	35
El Daklyeh (R)	34	4	15	15	34	52	27
Nogoom (R)	34	5	11	18	30	46	26

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

2018-19 – CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cano Sport (C)	5	4	0	1	11	7	12
Leones Veg	5	2	2	1	7	5	8
Dep Niefang	5	2	2	1	6	5	8
Futuro Kings	5	2	1	2	3	4	7
Akonangui	5	1	2	2	6	7	5
Dep Unidad	5	0	1	4	4	9	1

EUROPE

UEFA SUPER CUP

Aug14 - Istanbul, Turkey
Liverpool (Eng) 2 (Mane 48, 95)
Chelsea (Eng) 2 (Giroud 36, Jorginho pen 101)
Aet. Liverpool 5-4 on pens
HT: 0-1. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 38,434. **Ref:** Frappart (Fra)
Liverpool: Adrian - Gomez, Matip, Van Dijk, Robertson (Alexander-Arnold 91), Milner (Wijnaldum 64), Fabinho, Henderson, Oxlade-Chamberlain (Roberto Firmino 46), Salah, Mane (Origi 103).
Chelsea: Kepa - Azpilicueta, Zouma, Christensen (Tomori 85), Emerson, Jorginho, Kante, Kovacic (Barkley 101), Pulisic (Mount 74), Giroud (Abraham 74), Pedro.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

2nd qualifying round
1st legs - Jul 23/24; 2nd legs - Jul 30/31
BATE Borisov (Bls) v Rosenborg (Nor) 2-1, 0-2 (agg 2-3); Celtic (Sco) v Nomme Kalju (Est) 5-0, 2-0 (agg 7-0); CFR Cluj (Rom) v Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr) 1-0, 2-2 (agg 3-2); Dundalk (RoI) v Qarabag (Aze) 1-1, 0-3 (agg 1-4); Ferencvaros (Hun) v Valletta (Mlt) 3-1, 1-1 (agg 4-2); Maribor (Sln) v AIK (Swe) 2-1, 2-3 (aet) (agg 4-4, Maribor on away goals); PSV Eindhoven (Hol) v Basle (Swi) 3-2, 1-2 (agg 4-4, Basle on away goals); Red Star Belgrade (Ser) v HJK Helsinki (Fin) 2-0, 1-2 (agg 3-2); Saburtalo (Geo) v Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) 0-2, 0-3 (agg 0-5); Sutjeska (Mne) v APOEL (Cyp) 0-1, 0-3 (agg 0-4); The New Saints (Wal) v Copenhagen (Den) 0-2, 0-1 (agg 0-3); Viktoria Plzen (CzR) v Olympiakos (Gre) 0-0, 0-4 (agg 0-4)
● *Losing teams entered Europa League in 3rd qual rnd*

3rd qualifying round
(teams with country abbreviation entered at this stage)
1st legs - Aug 6/7; 2nd legs - Aug13
APOEL v Qarabag 1-2, 2-0 (agg 3-2); Basaksehir (Tur) v Olympiakos 0-1, 0-2 (agg 0-3); Basle v LASK Linz (Aut) 1-2, 1-3 (agg 2-5); CFR Cluj v Celtic 1-1, 4-3 (agg 5-4); Club Brugge (Blg) v Dynamo Kiev (Ukr) 1-0, 3-3 (agg 4-3); Dinamo Zagreb v Ferencvaros 1-1, 4-0 (agg 5-1); Krasnodar (Rus) v Porto (Por) 0-1, 3-2 (agg 3-3, Krasnodar on away goals); Maribor v Rosenborg 1-3, 1-3 (agg 2-6); PAOK Salonika (Gre) v Ajax (Hol) 2-2, 2-3 (agg 4-5); Red Star Belgrade v Copenhagen 1-1, 1-1 (aet) (agg 2-2, Red Star Belgrade 7-6 on pens)
● *Losing teams enter Europa League*

EUROPA LEAGUE

2nd qualifying round
(losing teams from Champions League prelim rnd & 1st qual rnd - except Sarajevo, see below - entered at this stage; marked with asterisk)
1st legs - Jul 25; 2nd legs - Jul 30-Aug1
AEK Larnaca (Cyp) v Levski Sofia (Bul) 3-0, 4-0 (agg 7-0); Alashkert (Arm) v FCSB (Rom) 0-3, 3-2 (agg 3-5); Ararat-Armenia* (Arm) v Lincoln Red Imps* (Gib) 2-0, 2-1 (agg 4-1); Aris (Gre) v AEL (Cyp) 0-0, 1-0 (agg 1-0); Arsenal Tula (Rus) v Neftchi (Aze) 0-1, 0-3 (agg 0-4); AZ Alkmaar (Hol) v Hacken (Swe) 0-0, 3-0 (agg 3-0); Buducnost (Mne) v Zorya (Ukr) 1-3, 0-1 (agg 1-4); Chikhura (Geo) v Aberdeen (Sco) 1-1, 0-5 (agg 1-6); Connah's Quay Nomads (Wal) v Partizan Belgrade (Ser) 0-1, 0-3 (agg 0-4); CSKA Sofia (Bul) v Osijek (Cro) 1-0, 0-1 (aet) (agg 1-1, CSKA Sofia 4-3 on pens); Domzale (Sln) v Malmo (Swe) 2-2, 2-3 (agg 4-5); Dunajska Streda (Slk) v Atromitos (Gre) 1-2, 2-3 (agg 3-5); Espanyol (Spa) v Stjarnan (Ice) 4-0, 3-1 (agg 7-1); FC Santa Coloma* (And) v Astana* (Kaz) 0-0, 1-4 (agg 1-4); Fehervar (Hun) v Vaduz (Lie) 1-0, 0-2 (aet) (agg 1-2); Flora Tallinn (Est) v Eintracht Frankfurt (Ger) 1-2, 1-2 (agg 2-4); Gent (Blg) v Viitorul (Rom) 6-3, 1-2 (agg 7-5); Hapoel Beer Sheva (Isr) v Kairat (Kaz) 2-0, 1-1 (agg 3-1); Haugesund (Nor) v Sturm Graz (Aut) 2-0, 1-2 (agg 3-2); HB* (Far) v Linfield* (NIr) 2-2, 0-1 (agg 2-3); Honved (Hun) v Universitatea Craiova (Rom) 0-0, 0-0 (aet) (agg 0-0, Universitatea Craiova 3-1 on pens); Jeunesse Esch (Lux) v Vitoria Guimaraes (Por) 0-1, 0-4 (agg 0-5); Lechia (Pol) v Brondby (Den) 2-1, 1-4 (aet) (agg 3-5); Legia Warsaw (Pol) v KuPS (Fin) 1-0, 0-0 (agg 1-0); Lokomotiv Plovdiv (Bul) v Spartak Trnava (Slk) 2-0, 1-3 (agg 3-3, Lokomotiv Plovdiv on away goals); Lucerne (Swi) v KI (Far) 1-0, 1-0 (agg 2-0); Malatyaspor (Tur) v Olimpija Ljubljana (Sln) 2-2, 1-0 (agg 3-2); Mlada Boleslav (CzR) v Ordabasy (Kaz) 1-1, 3-2 (agg 4-3); Molde (Nor) v Cukaricki (Ser) 0-0, 3-1 (agg 3-1); Norrkoping (Swe) v Liepaja (Lat) 2-0, 1-0 (agg 3-0); Partizani* (Alb) v Sheriff* (Mol) 0-1, 1-1 (agg 1-2); Piast Gliwice* (Pol) v Riga FC* (Lat) 3-2, 1-2 (agg 4-4, Riga FC on away goals); Pyunik (Arm) v Jablonec (CzR) 2-1, 0-0 (agg 2-1); Qabala (Aze) v Dinamo Tbilisi (Geo) 0-2, 0-3 (agg 0-5); Rangers (Sco) v Progres Niederkorn (Lux) 2-0, 0-0 (agg 2-0); Shakhtyor (Bls) v Esbjerg (Den) 2-0, 0-0 (agg 2-0); Shamrock Rovers (RoI) v Apollon (Cyp) 2-1, 1-3 (aet) (agg 3-4); Shkendija* (NMa) v F91 Dudelange* (Lux) 1-2, 1-1 (agg 2-3); Slovan Bratislava* (Slk) v Feronikeli* (Kos) 2-1, 2-0 (agg 4-1); Strasbourg (Fra) v Maccabi Haifa (Isr) 3-1, 1-2 (agg 4-3); Torino (Ita) v Debrecen (Hun) 3-0, 4-1 (agg 7-1); Tre Penne* (SaM) v Suduva* (Lit) 0-5, 0-5 (agg 0-10); Utrecht (Hol) v Zrinjski (Bos) 1-1, 1-2 (aet) (agg 2-3); Valur* (Ice) v Ludogorets* (Bul) 1-1, 0-4 (agg 1-5); Ventspils (Lat) v Gzira United (Mlt) 4-0, 2-2 (agg 6-2); Wolverhampton Wanderers (Eng) v Crusaders (NIr) 2-0, 4-1 (agg 6-1)
Bye to 3rd qualifying round: *Sarajevo (Bos)*

3rd qualifying round
(teams with country abbreviation entered at this stage - those with an asterisk too are losing teams from Champions League 2nd qual rnd, except Sarajevo, from 1st qual rnd)
1st legs - Aug 6-8; 2nd legs - Aug13-15
AEK Larnaca v Gent 1-1, 0-3 (agg 1-4); Antwerp (Blg) v Viktoria Plzen* (CzR) 1-0, 1-2 (aet) (agg 2-2, Antwerp on away goals); Ararat-Armenia v Saburtalo* (Geo) 1-2, 2-0 (agg 3-2); Astana v Valletta* (Mlt) 5-1, 4-0 (agg 9-1); Austria Vienna (Aut) v Apollon 1-2, 1-3 (agg 2-5); Brondby v Sporting Braga (Por) 2-4, 1-3 (agg 3-7); CSKA Sofia v Zorya 1-1, 0-1 (agg 1-2); F91 Dudelange v Nomme Kalju* (Est) 3-1, 1-0 (agg 4-1); FCSB v Mlada Boleslav 0-0, 1-0 (agg 1-0); Feyenoord (Hol) v Dinamo Tbilisi 4-0, 1-1 (agg 5-1); Haugesund v PSV Eindhoven* (Hol) 0-1, 0-0 (agg 0-1); Legia Warsaw v Atromitos 0-0, 2-0 (agg 2-0); Lokomotiv Plovdiv v Strasbourg 0-1, 0-1 (agg 0-2); Lucerne v Espanyol 0-3, 0-3 (agg 0-6); Ludogorets v The New Saints* (Wal) 5-0, 4-0 (agg 9-0); Maccabi Tel Aviv* (Isr) v Suduva 1-2, 1-2 (agg 2-4); Malmo v Zrinjski 3-0, 0-1 (agg 3-1); Mariupol (Ukr) v AZ Alkmaar 0-0, 0-4 (agg 0-4); Midtjylland (Den) v Rangers 2-4, 1-3 (agg 3-7); Molde v Aris 3-0, 1-3 (aet) (agg 4-3); Neftchi v Bnei Yehuda (Isr) 2-2, 1-2 (agg 3-4); Norrkoping v Hapoel Beer Sheva 1-1, 1-3 (agg 2-4); Partizan Belgrade v Malatyaspor 3-1, 0-1 (agg 3-2); Pyunik v Wolverhampton Wanderers 0-4, 0-4 (agg 0-8); Riga FC v HJK Helsinki* (Fin) 1-1, 2-2 (agg 3-3, Riga FC on away goals); Rijeka (Cro) v Aberdeen 2-0, 2-0 (agg 4-0); Sarajevo* (Bos) v BATE Borisov* (Bls) 1-2, 0-0 (agg 1-2); Sheriff v AIK* (Swe) 1-2, 1-1 (agg 2-3); Slovan Bratislava v Dundalk* (RoI) 1-0, 3-1 (agg 4-1); Sparta Prague (CzR) v Trabzonspor (Tur) 2-2, 1-2 (agg 3-4); Sutjeska* (Mne) v Linfield 1-2, 2-3 (agg 3-5); Thun (Swi) v Spartak Moscow (Rus) 2-3, 1-2 (agg 3-5); Torino v Shakhtyor 5-0, 1-1 (agg 6-1); Universitatea Craiova v AEK Athens (Gre) 0-2, 1-1 (agg 1-3); Vaduz v Eintracht Frankfurt 0-5, 0-1 (agg 0-6); Ventspils v Vitoria Guimaraes 0-3, 0-6 (agg 0-9)

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Round of 16
1st legs

Jul 23
Godoy Cruz (Arg) 2 (Garcia 6, 29)
Palmeiras (Bra) 2 (Felipe Melo 34, Borja 59)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)

LDU Quito (Ecu) 3 (Ayovi 12, J Julio 73, Aguirre 85)
Olimpia (Par) 1 (Rojas 61)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Loustau (Arg)

River Plate (Arg) 0
Cruzeiro (Bra) 0
Ref: Bascunan (Chl)

Jul 24
Athletico Paranaense (Bra) 0
Boca Juniors (Arg) 1 (Mac Allister 83)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Fedorczuk (Uru)

Emelec (Ecu) 2 (Godoy 10, Caicedo 79)
Flamengo (Bra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Rapallini (Arg)
Sent off: Vega (Emelec) 54

Nacional (Uru) 0
Internacional (Bra) 1 (Guerrero 90)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Pitana (Arg)

San Lorenzo (Arg) 0
Cerro Porteno (Par) 0
Ref: Tobar (Chl)
Sent off: Espinola (Cerro Porteno) 64

Jul 25
Gremio (Bra) 2 (Diego Tardelli 71, David Braz 84)
Libertad (Par) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ostojich (Uru)
Sent off: Pedro Geromel (Gremio) 51

2nd legs

Jul 30
Cruzeiro 0
River Plate 0
Ref: Tobar (Chl)
Agg 0-0, River Plate 4-2 on pens

Olimpia 1 (Mendieta 35)
LDU Quito 1 (J Julio 20)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Haro (Per)
Sent off: J Julio 48, Realpe (from the bench) 90+7 (both LDU Quito)
LDU Quito 4-2 on agg

Palmeiras 4 (Raphael Veiga pen 57, Borja 74, Gustavo Scarpa 84, Dudu 90+4)
Godoy Cruz 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Ostojich (Uru)
Sent off: Manzur (Godoy Cruz) 88
Palmeiras 6-2 on agg

Jul 31
Boca Juniors 2 (Abila 57, Salvio 90+5)
Athletico Paranaense 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Bascunan (Chl)
BocaJuniors 3-0 on agg

Cerro Porteno 2 (Larrivey pen 56, Ruiz 63)
San Lorenzo 1 (Bareiro pen 18)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)
Cerro Porteno 2-1 on agg

Flamengo 2 (Gabriel Barbosa pen 10, 19)
Emelec 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Pitana (Arg)
Agg 2-2, Flamengo 4-2 on pens

Internacional 2 (Rodrigo Moledo 16, Guerrero 90+4)
Nacional 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Rapallini (Arg)
Internacional 3-0 on agg

Aug1
Libertad 0
Gremio 3 (Jean Pyerre pen 6, Andre Felipe 20, 45+2)
HT: 0-3. **Ref:** Carrillo (Per)
Gremio 5-0 on agg

SUDAMERICANA CUP

Round of 16
1st legs - Jul 9-25; 2nd legs - Jul16-Aug1
Botafogo (Bra) v Atletico Mineiro (Bra) 0-1, 0-2 (agg 0-3); Caracas (Ven) v Independiente del Valle (Ecu) 0-0, 0-2 (agg 0-2); Colon (Arg) v Argentinos Juniors (Arg) 0-1, 1-0 (agg 1-1, Colon 4-3 on pens); Corinthians (Bra) v Montevideo Wanderers (Uru) 2-0, 2-1 (agg 4-1); Independiente (Arg) v Universidad Catolica (Ecu) 1-0, 2-3 (agg 3-3, Independiente on away goals); Penarol (Uru) v Fluminense (Bra) 1-2, 1-3 (agg 2-5); Royal Pari (Bol) v La Equidad (Col) 1-2, 1-2 (agg 2-4); Zulia (Ven) v Sporting Cristal (Per) 1-0, 2-3 (agg 3-3, Zulia on away goals)

ASIA

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Round of 16
1st legs - Jun18-Aug 6; 2nd legs - Jun 25-Aug13
Al Ahli (Sau) v Al Hilal (Sau) 2-4, 1-0 (agg 3-4); Al Duhail (Qat) v Al Sadd (Qat) 1-1, 1-3 (agg 2-4); Al Ittihad (Sau) v Zob Ahan (Irn) 2-1, 4-3 (agg 6-4); Al Nassr (Sau) v Al Wahda (UAE) 1-1, 3-2 (agg 4-3); Guangzhou Evergrande (Chn) v Shandong Luneng (Chn) 2-1, 2-3 (aet) (agg 4-4, Guangzhou Evergrande 6-5 on pens); Kashima Antlers (Jap) v Sanfrecce Hiroshima (Jap) 1-0, 2-3 (agg 3-3, Kashima Antlers on away goals); Shanghai SIPG (Chn) v Jeonbuk Motors (SKo) 1-1, 1-1 (aet) (agg 2-2, Shanghai SIPG 5-3 on pens); Urawa Reds (Jap) v Ulsan Hyundai (SKo) 1-2, 3-0 (agg 4-2)

MACAU

2019 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chao Pak Kei (C)	18	15	2	1	75	14	47
Cheng Fung	18	12	1	5	45	27	37
Benfica	18	11	2	5	40	16	35
Monte Carlo	18	10	4	4	41	22	34
Ka I	18	8	3	7	31	36	27
Hang Sai	18	8	0	10	35	40	24
Sporting	18	6	4	8	37	43	22
Policia	18	5	1	12	18	45	16
Tim Iec (R)	18	4	3	11	23	52	15
Devel'ment (R)	18	1	0	17	18	68	3

CONCACAF

CONCACAF LEAGUE

Preliminary round
1st legs - Jul 30-Aug1; 2nd legs - Aug 6-8
Alianza (ESv) v San Francisco (Pan) 5-1, 1-0 (agg 6-1); Belmopan Bandits (Blz) v Saprissa (CR) 1-3, 1-3 (agg 2-6); Comunicaciones (Gtm) v Marathon (Hnd) 2-1, 1-1 (agg 3-2); Forge (Can) v Antigua GFC (Gtm) 2-1, 0-0 (agg 2-1); Real Esteli (Nic) v Santa Tecla (ESv) 2-1, 0-1 (agg 2-2, Santa Tecla on away goals); Robinhood (Sur) v Capoise (Hai) 0-0, 1-1 (agg 1-1, Robinhood on away goals)

TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS

2019 Championship Final
Jul 6: Academy Jaguars 4 Beaches 1.

Internationals

WAFF CHAMPIONSHIP
(West Asian Football Federation)
Played in Iraq

Group A
Jul 30 - Karbala
Iraq 1 (H Ali 58)
Lebanon 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Abdulnabi (Bhn)

Yemen 0
Palestine 1 (Hamed 27)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Al Majarafi (Oma)

Aug 2 - Karbala
Palestine 1 (Batran pen 2)
Iraq 2 (Abdul-Raheem 22, H Ali pen 84)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Al Khudhayr (Sau)

Lebanon 2 (N Matar 81, Chaito 90+1)
Syria 1 (Al Douni 48)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Arafah (Jor)

Aug 5 - Karbala
Syria 1 (Al Khatib 61)
Yemen 1 (Qarawi 45+2)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Al Majarafi (Oma)

Lebanon 0
Palestine 0
Ref: Khalefah (Kuw)

Aug 8 - Karbala
Yemen 2 (Mansoor 43, Al Matari pen 45+1)
Lebanon 1 (Kdouh 27)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** Al Samaheeji (Bhn)

Syria 0
Iraq 0
Ref: Arafah (Jor)

Aug11 - Karbala
Palestine 4 (Batran 45+4, Dabbagh pen 60, 62, Yameen 90)
Syria 3 (Mobayed 3, Al Khatib pen 66, Mardikian 74)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Khalefah (Kuw)

Iraq 2 (H Ali 26, Bayesh pen 31)
Yemen 1 (Al Matari 90)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Al Samaheeji (Bhn)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iraq (Q)	4	3	1	0	5	2	10
Palestine	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
Yemen	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Lebanon	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
Syria	4	0	2	2	5	7	2

Group B
Aug 4 - Erbil
Jordan 0
Bahrain 1 (Abdullatif 69)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Al Walidi (Yem)

Saudi Arabia 1 (Sufyani 13)
Kuwait 2 (Al Musawi pen 25, Ajab 67)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Al Qassas (Pal)
Sent off: Hani (Kuwait) 90+4

Aug 7 - Erbil
Bahrain 0
Saudi Arabia 0
Ref: Rabie (Syr)

Kuwait 1 (Zayid pen 3)
Jordan 1 (Al Ajalin 90+4)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Issa (Leb)
Sent off: Khaled (Kuwait) 61

Aug10 - Erbil
Jordan 3 (Murjan 59, Al Rawashdeh 90+3, Shelbaieh pen 90+9)
Saudi Arabia 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Al Qassas (Pal)
Sent off: Malayekah (Saudi Arabia)

Kuwait 0
Bahrain 1 (Abdullatif 80)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Al Baag (Irq)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bahrain (Q)	3	2	1	0	2	0	7
Jordan	3	1	1	1	4	2	4
Kuwait	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Saudi Arabia	3	0	1	2	1	5	1

● *Group winners qualified for Final*

Final
Aug14 - Karbala
Iraq 0
Bahrain 1 (Moosa 40)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Al Khudhayr (Sau)
Sent off: Ibrahim 90+7 (Iraq)

IOIG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT
(Indian Ocean Island Games)
Played in Mauritius

Group A
Jul18 - Curepipe
Mauritius 1 (Nazira 2)
Seychelles 1 (Bibi 67)

Jul 20 - Flacq
Seychelles 0
Madagascar 0

Jul 22 - Curepipe
Madagascar 1 (Randriamanjaka 43)
Mauritius 1 (Nazira 66)
Sent off: Rabarijaona (Madagascar) 33

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mauritius (Q)	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Seychelles (Q)	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Madagascar	2	0	2	0	1	1	2

Group B
Jul18 - Flacq
Reunion 4 (Vardapin 30, Fontaine 32, 67, Sarpedon 62)
Maldives 0

Mayotte 2 (Ben Djadid pen 50, Mouhtar 83)
Comoros 0

Jul 20 - Curepipe
Reunion 1 (Assoumani 76)
Mayotte 0

Maldives 0
Comoros 3 (I Youssouf 29, Issa 38, Malaga 45)

Jul 22 - Flacq
Mayotte 3 (Habib 14, Ben Yahaya 26, Mouritaza 56)
Maldives 1 (Naim 22)

Comoros 1 (Ali Nassim M'Changama 90+2)
Reunion 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Reunion (Q)	3	2	0	1	5	1	6
Mayotte (Q)	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Comoros	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Maldives	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

● *Top 2 in both groups qualified for semi-finals*

Semi-finals
Jul 24 - Flacq
Reunion 4 (Damour 16, Riviere 41, Phileas 46, Loricourt 62)
Seychelles 0
Sent off: Mathiot (Seychelles) 88

Jul 24 - Curepipe
Mauritius 1 (Perticots pen 115)
Mayotte 0
Aet

3rd-place match
Jul 26 - Flacq
Mayotte 3 (Rasolofonirina 21, Ben Yahaya 73, 83)
Seychelles 1 (Damoo 34)

Final
Jul 28 - Flacq
Mauritius 1 (Francois 69)
Reunion 1 (Fontaine 45+1)
Aet. Reunion1-0 on pens

FRIENDLIES

Sunday, August 11
Aug11 - Georgetown
St Vincent & The Grenadines 1 (Cunningham 4)
Trinidad & Tobago 0
HT: 1-0
Sent off: Justin Garcia (Trinidad & Tobago) 45+1

KEY TO TABLES
(C) = champions
(R) = relegated
(Q) = qualified for next stage

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PREMIER LEAGUE 2019-20

ARSENAL

GOALKEEPERS
1 Bernd **LENO** (Ger) (27) 04.03.92
33 Matt **MACEY** (24) 09.09.94
26 Emiliano **MARTINEZ** (Arg) (27) 02.09.92

DEFENDERS
2 Hector **BELLERIN** (Spa) (24) 19.03.95
21 Calum **CHAMBERS** (24) 20.01.95
23 **DAVID LUIZ** (Bra) (32) 22.04.87
16 Rob **HOLDING** (23) 20.09.95
31 Sead **KOLASINAC** (Bos) (26) 20.06.93
27 Konstantinos **MAVROPANOS** (Gre) (21) 11.12.97
18 Nacho **MONREAL** (Spa) (33) 26.02.86
20 Shkodran **MUSTAFI** (Ger) (27) 17.04.92
5 Sokratis **PAPASTATHOPOULOS** (Gre) (31) 09.06.88
3 Kieran **TIERNEY** (Sco) (22) 05.06.97

MIDFIELDERS
8 Dani **CEBALLOS** (Spa) (23) 07.08.96
4 Mohamed **ELNENY** (Egy) (27) 11.07.92
29 Matteo **GUENDOUZI** (Fra) (20) 14.04.99
15 Ainsley **MAITLAND-NILES** (22) 29.08.97
7 Henrikh **MKHITARYAN** (Arm) (30) 21.01.89
24 Reiss **NELSON** (19) 10.12.99
10 Mesut **OZIL** (Ger) (30) 15.10.88
32 Emile **SMITH ROWE** (19) 28.07.00
11 Lucas **TORREIRA** (Uru) (23) 11.02.96
28 Joe **WILLOCK** (20) 20.08.99
34 Granit **XHAKA** (Swi) (26) 27.09.92

FORWARDS
14 Pierre-Emerick **AUBAMEYANG** (Gab) (30) 18.06.89
9 Alexandre **LACAZETTE** (Fra) (28) 28.05.91
35 Gabriel **MARTINELLI** (Bra) (18) 18.06.01
19 Nicolas **PEPE** (IvC) (24) 29.05.95

MANAGER
Unai **EMERY** (Spa) (47) 03.11.71

ASTON VILLA

GOALKEEPERS
1 Tom **HEATON** (33) 15.04.86
28 Lovre **KALINIC** (Cro) (29) 03.04.90
25 Orjan **NYLAND** (Nor) (28) 10.09.90
12 Jed **STEER** (26) 23.09.92

DEFENDERS
5 James **CHESTER** (Wal) (30) 23.01.89
27 Ahmed **ELMOHAMADY** (Egy) (31) 09.09.87
22 Bjorn **ENGELS** (Blg) (24) 15.09.94
24 Frederic **GUILBERT** (Fra) (24) 24.12.94
30 Kortney **HAUSE** (24) 16.07.95
15 Ezri **KONSA** (21) 23.10.97
40 Tyrone **MINGS** (27) 27.02.92
18 Matt **TARGETT** (23) 18.09.95
3 Neil **TAYLOR** (Wal) (30) 07.02.89

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6 **DOUGLAS LUIZ** (Bra) (21) 09.05.98
21 Anwar **EL GHAZI** (Hol) (24) 03.05.95
10 Jack **GREALISH** (23) 10.09.95
14 Conor **HOURIHANE** (Rol) (28) 02.02.91
23 **JOTA** (Spa) (28) 16.06.91
8 Henri **LANSBURY** (28) 12.10.90
7 John **McGINN** (Sco) (24) 18.10.94
11 Marvelous **NAKAMBA** (Zim) (25) 19.01.94
- Jacob **RAMSEY** (18) 28.05.01
17 **TREZEGUET** (Egy) (24) 01.10.94

FORWARDS
39 Keinan **DAVIS** (21) 13.02.98
26 Jonathan **KODJIA** (IvC) (29) 22.10.89
9 **WESLEY** (Bra) (22) 26.11.96

MANAGER
Dean **SMITH** (48) 19.03.71

BOURNEMOUTH

GOALKEEPERS
27 Asmir **BEGOVIC** (Bos) (32) 20.06.87
1 Artur **BORUC** (Pol) (39) 20.02.80
12 Aaron **RAMSDALE** (21) 14.05.98
42 Mark **TRAVERS** (Rol) (20) 18.05.99

DEFENDERS
5 Nathan **AKE** (Hol) (24) 18.02.95
3 Steve **COOK** (28) 19.04.91
11 Charlie **DANIELS** (32) 07.09.86
2 Simon **FRANCIS** (34) 16.02.85
26 Lloyd **KELLY** (20) 01.10.98
33 Chris **MEPHAM** (Wal) (21) 05.11.97
21 Diego **RICO** (Spa) (26) 23.02.93
25 Jack **SIMPSON** (22) 08.01.97
15 Adam **SMITH** (28) 29.04.91
17 Jack **STACEY** (23) 06.04.96

MIDFIELDERS
29 Philip **BILLING** (Den) (23) 11.06.96
20 David **BROOKS** (Wal) (22) 08.07.97
36 Matt **BUTCHER** (22) 14.05.97
16 Lewis **COOK** (22) 03.02.97
54 Alex **DOBRE** (Rom) (21) 30.08.98
24 Ryan **FRASER** (Sco) (25) 24.02.94
4 Dan **GOSLING** (29) 01.02.90
14 Arnaut **GROENEVELD** (Hol) (22) 31.01.97
10 Jordon **IBE** (23) 08.12.95
53 Gavin **KILKENNY** (Rol) (19) 01.02.00
8 Jefferson **LERMA** (Col) (24) 25.10.94
38 Nnamdi **OFOBORH** (Nga) (19) 07.11.99
19 Junior **STANISLAS** (29) 26.11.89
6 Andrew **SURMAN** (33) 20.08.86
28 Kyle **TAYLOR** (20) 28.08.99
22 Harry **WILSON** (Wal) (22) 22.03.97

FORWARDS
7 Joshua **KING** (Nor) (27) 15.01.92
9 Dominic **SOLANKE** (21) 14.09.97
13 Callum **WILSON** (27) 27.02.92

MANAGER
Eddie **HOWE** (41) 29.11.77

BRIGHTON & HA

GOALKEEPERS
27 David **BUTTON** (30) 27.02.89
1 Mat **RYAN** (Aus) (27) 08.04.92
23 Jason **STEELE** (29) 18.08.90

DEFENDERS
14 Leon **BALOGUN** (Nga) (31) 28.06.88
28 Tudor **BALUTA** (Rom) (20) 27.03.99
30 **BERNARDO** (Bra) (24) 14.05.95
3 Gaetan **BONG** (Cam) (31) 25.04.88
33 Dan **BURN** (27) 09.05.92
4 Shane **DUFFY** (Rol) (27) 01.01.92
5 Lewis **DUNK** (27) 21.11.91
22 Martin **MONTOYA** (Spa) (28) 14.04.91
21 Ezequiel **SCHELOTTO** (Ita) (30) 23.05.89
15 Adam **WEBSTER** (24) 04.01.95

MIDFIELDERS
8 Yves **BISSOUMA** (Mwi) (23) 30.08.96
13 Pascal **GROSS** (Ger) (28) 15.06.91
19 Jose **IZQUIERDO** (Col) (27) 07.07.92
20 Solly **MARCH** (25) 20.07.94
18 Aaron **MOOY** (Aus) (28) 15.09.90
24 Davy **PROPPER** (Hol) (28) 02.09.91
6 Dale **STEPHENS** (30) 12.06.89
11 Leandro **TROSSARD** (Blg) (24) 04.12.94

FORWARDS
10 Florin **ANDONE** (Rom) (26) 11.04.93
16 Alireza **JAHANBAKHSH** (Irn) (26) 11.08.93
7 Neal **MAUPAY** (Fra) (23) 14.08.96
17 Glenn **MURRAY** (35) 25.09.83

MANAGER
Graham **POTTER** (44) 20.05.75

BURNLEY

GOALKEEPERS
20 Joe **HART** (32) 19.04.87
30 Adam **LEGZDINS** (32) 28.11.86
15 Bailey **PEACOCK-FARRELL** (22) 29.10.96
1 Nick **POPE** (27) 19.04.92

DEFENDERS
26 Phil **BARDSLEY** (Sco) (34) 28.06.85
34 Jimmy **DUNNE** (Rol) (21) 19.10.97
14 Ben **GIBSON** (26) 15.01.93
28 Kevin **LONG** (Rol) (29) 18.08.90
2 Matthew **LOWTON** (30) 09.06.89
6 Ben **MEE** (29) 21.09.89
23 Erik **PIETERS** (Hol) (31) 07.08.88
5 James **TARKOWSKI** (26) 19.11.92
3 Charlie **TAYLOR** (25) 18.09.93

MIDFIELDERS
12 Robbie **BRADY** (Rol) (27) 14.01.92
4 Jack **CORK** (30) 25.06.89
16 Steven **DEFOUR** (Blg) (31) 15.04.88
8 Danny **DRINKWATER** (29) 05.03.90
7 Johann Berg **GUDMUNDSSON** (Ice) (28) 27.10.90
13 Jeff **HENDRICK** (Rol) (27) 31.01.92
25 Aaron **LENNON** (32) 16.04.87
11 Dwight **McNEIL** (19) 22.11.99
18 Ashley **WESTWOOD** (29) 01.04.90

FORWARDS
10 Ashley **BARNES** (Aut) (29) 30.10.89
19 Jay **RODRIGUEZ** (30) 29.07.89
27 Matej **VYDRA** (CzR) (27) 01.05.92
9 Chris **WOOD** (NZ) (27) 07.12.91

MANAGER
Sean **DYCHE** (48) 28.06.71

CHELSEA

GOALKEEPERS
1 Kepa **ARRIZABALAGA** (Spa) (25) 03.10.94
- Jamal **BLACKMAN** (25) 27.10.93
13 Willy **CABALLERO** (Arg) (37) 28.09.81
31 Jamie **CUMMING** (20) 04.09.99

DEFENDERS
3 Marcos **ALONSO** (Spa) (28) 28.12.90
28 Cesar **AZPILICUETA** (Spa) (30) 28.08.89
4 Andreas **CHRISTENSEN** (Den) (23) 10.04.96
33 **EMERSON** Palmieri (Ita) (25) 03.08.94
- Michael **HECTOR** (Jam) (27) 19.07.92
24 Reece **JAMES** (19) 08.12.99
- Baba **RAHMAN** (Gha) (25) 02.07.94
2 Antonio **RUDIGER** (Ger) (26) 03.03.93
29 Fikayo **TOMORI** (21) 19.12.97
15 Kurt **ZOUMA** (Fra) (24) 27.10.94

MIDFIELDERS
14 Tiemoue **BAKAYOKO** (Fra) (25) 17.08.94
8 Ross **BARKLEY** (25) 05.12.93
5 **JORGINHO** (Ita) (27) 20.12.91
7 N'Golo **KANTE** (Fra) (28) 29.03.91
17 Mateo **KOVACIC** (Cro) (25) 06.05.94
12 Ruben **LOFTUS-CHEEK** (23) 23.01.96
19 Mason **MOUNT** (20) 10.01.99
- Danilo **PANTIC** (Ser) (22) 26.10.96
- Marco **VAN GINKEL** (Hol) (26) 01.12.92

FORWARDS
9 Tammy **ABRAHAM** (21) 02.10.97
23 Michy **BATSHUAYI** (Blg) (25) 02.10.93
18 Olivier **GIROUD** (Fra) (32) 30.09.86
20 Callum **HUDSON-ODOI** (18) 07.11.00
16 **KENEDY** (Bra) (23) 08.02.96
- Lucas **PIAZON** (Bra) (25) 20.01.94
22 Christian **PULISIC** (USA) (20) 18.09.98
11 **PEDRO** (Spa) (32) 28.07.87
10 **WILLIAN** (Bra) (31) 09.08.88

MANAGER
Frank **LAMPARD** (41) 20.06.78

CRYSTAL PALACE

GOALKEEPERS
31 Vicente **GUAITA** (Spa) (32) 10.01.87
19 Stephen **HENDERSON** (Rol) (31) 02.05.88
13 Wayne **HENNESSEY** (Wal) (32) 24.01.87

DEFENDERS
24 Gary **CAHILL** (33) 19.12.85
6 Scott **DANN** (32) 14.02.87
34 Martin **KELLY** (29) 27.04.90
44 Jairo **RIEDEWALD** (Hol) (22) 09.09.96
12 Mamadou **SAKHO** (Fra) (29) 13.02.90
15 Jeffrey **SCHLUPP** (Gha) (26) 23.12.92
5 James **TOMKINS** (30) 29.03.89
3 Patrick **VAN AANHOLT** (Hol) (29) 29.08.90
2 Joel **WARD** (29) 29.10.89

MIDFIELDERS
23 Víctor **CAMARASA** (Spa) (25) 28.05.94
8 Cheikhou **KOUYATE** (Sen) (29) 21.12.89
18 James **McARTHUR** (Sco) (31) 07.10.87
22 James **McCARTHY** (Rol) (28) 12.11.90
7 Max **MEYER** (Ger) (23) 18,09.95
4 Luka **MILIVOJEVIC** (Ser) (28) 07.04.91

FORWARDS
9 Jordan **AYEW** (Gha) (27) 11.09.91
17 Christian **BENTEKE** (Blg) (28) 03.12.90
10 Andros **TOWNSEND** (28) 16.07.91
21 Connor **WICKHAM** (26) 31.03.93
11 Wilfried **ZAHA** (26) 10.11.92

MANAGER
Roy **HODGSON** (72) 09.08.47

EVERTON

GOALKEEPERS
49 Jonas **LOSSL** (Den) (30) 01.02.89
1 Jordan **PICKFORD** (25) 07.03.94
22 Maarten **STEKELENBURG** (Hol) (36) 22.09.82

DEFENDERS
3 Leighton **BAINES** (34) 11.12.84
23 Seamus **COLEMAN** (Rol) (30) 11.10.88
12 Lucas **DIGNE** (Fra) (26) 20.07.93
2 Mason **HOLGATE** (22) 22.10.96
5 Michael **KEANE** (26) 11.01.93
30 Cuco **MARTINA** (Cur) (29) 25.09.89
13 Yerry **MINA** (Col) (24) 23.09.94
19 Djibril **SIDIBE** (Fra) (27) 29.07.92

MIDFIELDERS
20 **BERNARD** (Bra) (26) 08.09.92
26 Tom **DAVIES** (21) 30.06.98
8 Fabian **DELPH** (29) 21.11.89
25 Jean-Philippe **GBAMIN** (IvC) (24) 25.05.95
21 Andre **GOMES** (Por) (26) 30.07.93
17 Alex **IWOBI** (Nga) (23) 03.05.96
18 Morgan **SCHNEIDERLIN** (Fra) (29) 08.11.89
10 Gylfi **SIGURDSSON** (Ice) (29) 08.09.89

FORWARDS
31 Yannick **BOLASIE** (DRC) (30) 24.05.89
9 Dominic **CALVERT-LEWIN** (22) 16.03.97
27 Moise **KEAN** (Ita) (19) 28.02.00
28 Kevin **MIRALLAS** (Blg) (31) 05.10.87
29 Oumar **NIASSE** (Sen) (29) 18.04.90
7 **RICHARLISON** (Bra) (22) 10.05.97
14 Cenk **TOSUN** (Tur) (28) 07.06.91
11 Theo **WALCOTT** (30) 16.03.89

MANAGER
Marco **SILVA** (Por) (42) 12.07.77

LEICESTER CITY

GOALKEEPERS
35 Eldin **JAKUPOVIC** (Swi) (34) 02.10.84
1 Kasper **SCHMEICHEL** (Den) (32) 05.11.86
12 Danny **WARD** (Wal) (26) 22.06.93

DEFENDERS
16 Filip **BENKOVIC** (Cro) (22) 13.07.97
3 Ben **CHILWELL** (22) 21.12.96
6 Johnny **EVANS** (NI) (31) 03.01.88
28 Christian **FUCHS** (Aut) (33) 07.04.86
2 James **JUSTIN** (21) 23.02.98
5 Wes **MORGAN** (Jam) (35) 21.01.84
21 Ricardo **PEREIRA** (Por) (25) 06.10.93
4 Caglar **SOYUNCU** (Tur) (23) 23.05.96

MIDFIELDERS
11 Marc **ALBRIGHTON** (29) 18.11.89
18 Daniel **AMARTEY** (Gha) (24) 21.12.94
15 Harvey **BARNES** (21) 09.12.97
20 Hamza **CHOUDHURY** (21) 01.10.97
22 Matty **JAMES** (28) 22.07.91
- Bartosz **KAPUSTKA** (Pol) (22) 23.12.96
10 James **MADDISON** (22) 23.11.96
24 Nampalys **MENDY** (Fra) (27) 23.06.92
25 Wilfred **NDIDI** (Nga) (22) 16.12.96
26 Dennis **PRAET** (Blg) (25) 14.05.94
- George **THOMAS** (Wal) (22) 24.03.97
8 Youri **TIELEMANS** (Blg) (22) 07.05.97

FORWARDS
27 Fousseni **DIABATE** (Mli) (23) 18.10.95
31 Rachid **GHEZZAL** (Alg) (27) 09.05.92
7 Demarai **GRAY** (23) 28.06.96
14 Kelechi **IHEANACHO** (Nga) (22) 03.10.96
17 Ayoze **PEREZ** (Spa) (26) 29.07.93
9 Jamie **VARDY** (32) 11.01.87

MANAGER
Brendan **RODGERS** (NI) (46) 26.01.73

LIVERPOOL

GOALKEEPERS
13 **ADRIAN** (Spa) (32) 03.01.87
1 **ALISSON** Becker (Bra) (26) 02.10.92
62 Caoimhin **KELLEHER** (Rol) (20) 23.11.98
22 Andy **LONERGAN** (35) 19.10.83

DEFENDERS
66 Trent **ALEXANDER-ARNOLD** (20) 07.10.98
2 Nathaniel **CLYNE** (28) 05.04.91
12 Joe **GOMEZ** (22) 23.05.97
51 Ki-Jana **HOEVER** (Hol) (17) 18.01.02
65 Yasser **LAROUCI** (Alg) (18) 01.01.01
6 Dejan **LOVREN** (Cro) (30) 05.07.89
32 Joel **MATIP** (Cam (28) 08.08.91
26 Andrew **ROBERTSON** (Sco) (25) 11.03.94
72 Sepp **VAN DEN BERG** (Hol) (17) 20.12.01
4 Virgil **VAN DIJK** (Hol) (28) 08.07.91

MIDFIELDERS
3 **FABINHO** (Bra) (25) 23.10.93
14 Jordan **HENDERSON** (29) 17.06.90
48 Curtis **JONES** (18) 30.01.01
8 Naby **KEITA** (Gui) (24) 10.02.95
40 Ryan **KENT** (22) 11.11.96
20 Adam **LALLANA** (31) 10.05.88
7 James **MILNER** (33) 04.01.86
15 Alex **OXLADE-CHAMBERLAIN** (26) 15.08.93
23 Xherdan **SHAQIRI** (Swi) (27) 10.10.91
5 Georginio **WIJNALDUM** (Hol) (28) 11.11.90

FORWARDS
24 Rhian **BREWSTER** (19) 01.04.00
67 Harvey **ELLIOTT** (16) 04.04.03
10 Sadio **MANE** (Sen) (27) 10.04.92
27 Divock **ORIGI** (Blg) (24) 18.04.95
9 **ROBERTO FIRMINO** (Bra) (27) 02.10.91
11 Mohamed **SALAH** (Egy) (27) 15.06.92

MANAGER
Jurgen **KLOPP** (Ger) (52) 16.06.67

MANCHESTER CITY

GOALKEEPERS

1 Claudio **BRAVO** (Chl) (36) 13.04.83
33 Scott **CARSON** (34) 03.09.85
31 **EDERSON** (Bra) (26) 17.08.93
32 Daniel **GRIMSHAW** (21) 16.01.98

DEFENDERS

12 **ANGELINO** (Spa) (22) 04.01.97
27 Joao **CANCELO** (Por) (25) 27.05.94
14 Aymeric **LAPORTE** (Fra) (25) 27.05.94
22 Benjamin **MENDY** (Fra) (25) 17.07.94
30 Nicolas **OTAMENDI** (Arg) (31) 12.02.88
5 John **STONES** (25) 28.05.94
2 Kyle **WALKER** (29) 28.05.90

MIDFIELDERS

17 Kevin **DE BRUYNE** (Blg) (28) 28.06.91
25 **FERNANDINHO** (Bra) (34) 04.05.85
47 Phil **FODEN** (19) 28.05.00
75 Aleix **GARCIA** (Spa) (22) 28.06.97
8 Ikay **GUNDOGAN** (Ger) (28) 24.10.90
26 Riyad **MAHREZ** (Alg) (28) 21.02.91
16 **RODRI** (Spa) (23) 22.06.96
20 Bernardo **SILVA** (Por) (25) 10.08.94
21 David **SILVA** (Spa) (33) 08.01.86
11 Oleksandr **ZINCHENKO** (Ukr) (22) 15.12.96

FORWARDS

10 Sergio **AGUERO** (Arg) (31) 02.06.88
9 Gabriel **JESUS** (Bra) (22) 03.04.97
19 Leroy **SANE** (Ger) (23) 11.01.96
7 Raheem **STERLING** (24) 08.12.94

MANAGER

Pep **GUARDIOLA** (Spa) (48) 18.01.71

MANCHESTER UTD

GOALKEEPERS

1 David **DE GEA** (Spa) (28) 07.11.90
13 Lee **GRANT** (36) 27.01.83
22 Sergio **ROMERO** (Arg) (32) 22.02.87

DEFENDERS

3 Eric **BAILLY** (IvC) (25) 12.04.94
20 Diogo **DALOT** (Por) (20) 18.03.99
36 Matteo **DARMIAN** (Ita) (29) 02.12.89
24 Timothy **FOSU-MENSAH** (Hol) (21) 02.01.98
4 Phil **JONES** (27) 21.02.92
2 Victor **LINDELOF** (Swe) (25) 17.07.94
5 Harry **MAGUIRE** (26) 05.03.93
16 Marcos **ROJO** (Arg) (29) 20.03.90
23 Luke **SHAW** (24) 12.07.95
12 Chris **SMALLING** (29) 22.11.89
38 Axel **TUANZEBE** (21) 14.11.97
29 Aaron **WAN-BISSAKA** (21) 26.11.97
18 Ashley **YOUNG** (34) 09.07.85

MIDFIELDERS

17 **FRED** (Bra) (26) 05.03.93
37 James **GARNER** (18) 13.03.01
28 Angel **GOMES** (19) 31.08.00
21 Daniel **JAMES** (Wal) (21) 10.11.97
14 Jesse **LINGARD** (26) 15.12.92
8 Juan **MATA** (Spa) (31) 28.04.88
31 Nemanja **MATIC** (Ser) (31) 01.08.88
39 Scott **McTOMINAY** (Sco) (22) 08.12.96
15 Andreas **PEREIRA** (Bra) (23) 01.01.96
6 Paul **POGBA** (Fra) (26) 15.03.93

FORWARDS

44 Tahith **CHONG** (Hol) (19) 04.12.99
26 Mason **GREENWOOD** (17) 01.10.01
9 Anthony **MARTIAL** (Fra) (23) 05.12.95
10 Marcus **RASHFORD** (21) 31.10.97

MANAGER

Ole Gunnar **SOLSKJAER** (Nor) (46) 26.02.73

NEWCASTLE UTD

GOALKEEPERS

26 Karl **DARLOW** (28) 08.10.90
1 Martin **DUBRAVKA** (Slk) (30) 15.01.89
21 Rob **ELLIOT** (Rol) (33) 30.04.86

DEFENDERS

2 Ciaran **CLARK** (Rol) (29) 26.09.89
3 Paul **DUMMETT** (Wal) (27) 26.09.91
18 Federico **FERNANDEZ** (Arg) (30) 21.02.89
17 Emil **KRAFTH** (Swe) (25) 02.08.94
6 Jamaal **LASCELLES** (25) 11.11.93
- Achraf **LAZAAR** (Mor) (27) 22.01.92
20 Florian **LEJEUNE** (Fra) (28) 20.05.91
19 Javier **MANQUILLO** (Spa) (25) 05.05.94
5 Fabian **SCHAR** (Swi) (27) 20.12.91
- Jamie **STERRY** (23) 21.11.95
15 Jetro **WILLEMS** (Hol) (25) 30.03.94
22 DeAndre **YEDLIN** (USA) (26) 09.07.93

MIDFIELDERS

- Rolando **AARONS** (23) 16.11.95
24 Miguel **ALMIRON** (Par) (25) 10.02.94
30 Christian **ATSU** (Gha) (27) 10.01.92
- Jack **COLBACK** (29) 24.10.89
14 Isaac **HAYDEN** (24) 22.03.95
4 **KI** Sung-yueng (SKo) (30) 24.01.89
43 Matthew **LONGSTAFF** (19) 21.03.00
36 Sean **LONGSTAFF** (21) 30.10.97
11 Matt **RITCHIE** (Sco) (29) 10.09.89
10 Allan **SAINT-MAXIMIN** (Fra) (22) 12.03.97
- Henri **SAIVET** (Fra) (28) 26.10.90
8 Jonjo **SHELVEY** (27) 27.02.92

FORWARDS

7 Andy **CARROLL** (30) 06.01.89
12 Dwight **GAYLE** (29) 17.10.89
9 **JOELINTON** (Bra) (23) 14.08.96
13 Yoshinori **MUTO** (Jap) (27) 15.07.92

MANAGER

Steve **BRUCE** (58) 31.12.60

NORWICH CITY

GOALKEEPERS

21 Ralf **FAHRMANN** (30) 27.09.88
1 Tim **KRUL** (Hol) (31) 03.04.88
33 Michael **McGOVERN** (NI) (35) 12.07.84

DEFENDERS

2 Max **AARONS** (19) 04.01.00
3 Sam **BYRAM** (25) 16.09.93
4 Ben **GODFREY** (21) 15.02.98
5 Grant **HANLEY** (Sco) (27) 20.11.91
16 Philip **HEISE** (Ger) (28) 20.06.91
12 Jamal **LEWIS** (NI) (21) 25.01.98
15 Timm **KLOSE** (Swi) (31) 09.05.88
6 Christoph **ZIMMERMANN** (Ger) (26) 12.01.93

MIDFIELDERS

24 Ibrahim **AMADOU** (Fra) (25) 06.04.93
17 Emi **BUENDIA** (Arg) (22) 25.12.96
14 Todd **CANTWELL** (21) 27.02.98
11 Onel **HERNANDEZ** (Ger) (26) 01.02.93
10 Moritz **LEITNER** (Ger) (26) 08.12.92
23 Kenny **McLEAN** (Sco) (27) 08.01.92
7 Patrick **ROBERTS** (22) 05.02.97
18 Marco **STIEPERMANN** (Ger) (28) 09.02.91
27 Alexander **TETTEY** (Nor) (33) 04.04.86
19 Tom **TRYBULL** (Ger) (26) 09.03.93
8 Mario **VRANCIC** (Bos) (30) 23.05.89

FORWARDS

20 Josip **DRMIC** (Swi) (26) 08.08.92
35 Adam **IDAH** (Rol) (18) 11.02.01
22 Teemu **PUKKI** (Fin) (29) 29.03.90
32 Dennis **SRBENY** (Ger) (25) 05.05.94

MANAGER

Daniel **FARKE** (Ger) (42) 30.10.76

SHEFFIELD UTD

GOALKEEPERS

1 Dean **HENDERSON** (22) 12.03.97
25 Simon **MOORE** (29) 19.05.90
- Michael **VERRIPS** (Hol) (22) 03.12.96

DEFENDERS

2 George **BALDOCK** (26) 09.03.93
6 Chris **BASHAM** (31) 20.07.88
12 John **EGAN** (Rol) (26) 20.10.92
18 Kieron **FREEMAN** (Wal) (27) 21.03.92
15 Phil **JAGIELKA** (37) 17.08.82
- Stephen **MALLON** (Rol) (20) 07.02.99
5 Jack **O'CONNELL** (25) 29.03.94
19 Richard **STEARMAN** (31) 19.08.87
3 Enda **STEVENS** (Rol) (29) 09.07.90
- Jake **WRIGHT** (33) 11.03.86

MIDFIELDERS

27 Muhamed **BESIC** (Bos) (26) 10.09.9
20 Kean **BRYAN** (22) 01.11.96
- Samir **CARRUTHERS** (Rol) (26) 04.04.93
8 Luke **FREEMAN** (27) 22.03.92
- Ricky **HOLMES** (32) 19.06.87
4 John **FLECK** (Sco) (28) 24.08.91
7 John **LUNDSTRAM** (25) 18.02.94
14 Ravel **MORRISON** (26) 02.02.93
16 Oliver **NORWOOD** (NI) (28) 12.04.91
23 Ben **OSBORN** (25) 05.08.94

FORWARDS

- Leon **CLARKE** (34) 10.02.85
9 Oli **McBURNIE** (Sco) (23) 04.06.96
17 David **McGOLDRICK** (Rol) (31) 29.11.87
22 Lys **MOUSSET** (Fra) (23) 08.02.96
11 Callum **ROBINSON** (Rol) (24) 02.02.95
10 Billy **SHARP** (33) 05.02.86

MANAGER

Chris **WILDER** (51) 23.09.67

SOUTHAMPTON

GOALKEEPERS

28 Angus **GUNN** (23) 22.01.96
41 Harry **LEWIS** (21) 20.12.97
1 Alex **McCARTHY** (29) 03.12.89

DEFENDERS

35 Jan **BEDNAREK** (Pol) (23) 12.04.96
21 Ryan **BERTRAND** (30) 05.08.89
38 Kevin **DANSO** (Aut) (20) 19.09.98
6 Wesley **HOEDT** (Hol) (25) 06.03.94
45 Sam **McQUEEN** (24) 06.02.95
31 Kayne **RAMSAY** (18) 10.10.00
2 Cedric **SOARES** (Por) (28) 31.08.91
5 Jack **STEPHENS** (25) 27.01.94
43 Yan **VALERY** (Fra) (20) 22.02.99
4 Jannik **VESTERGAARD** (Den) (27) 03.08.92
29 Jake **VOKINS** (19) 17.03.00
3 Maya **YOSHIDA** (Jap) (31) 24.08.88

MIDFIELDERS

17 Stuart **ARMSTRONG** (Sco) (27) 30.03.92
19 Sofiane **BOUFAL** (Mor) (25) 17.09.93
12 Moussa **DJENEPO** (Mli) (21) 15.06.98
11 Mohamed **ELYOUNOUSSI** (Nor) (25) 04.08.94
42 Jake **HESKETH** (23) 27.03.96
23 Pierre-Emile **HOJBJERG** (Den) (24) 05.08.95
18 Mario **LEMINA** (Gab) (26) 01.09.93
14 Oriol **ROMEU** (Spa) (27) 24.09.91
30 Callum **SLATTERY** (20) 08.02.99
27 Will **SMALLBONE** (Rol) (19) 21.02.00
16 James **WARD-PROWSE** (24) 01.11.94

FORWARDS

10 Che **ADAMS** (23) 13.07.96
25 Guido **CARRILLO** (Arg) (28) 25.05.91
9 Danny **INGS** (27) 23.07.92
7 Shane **LONG** (Rol) (32) 22.01.87
40 Dan **N'LUNDULU** (20) 05.02.99
20 Michael **OBAFEMI** (Rol) (19) 06.07.00
22 Nathan **REDMOND** (25) 06.03.94

MANAGER

Ralph **HASENHUTTL** (Aut) (52) 09.08.67

TOTTENHAM H

GOALKEEPERS

22 Paulo **GAZZANIGA** (Arg) (27) 02.01.92
1 Hugo **LLORIS** (Fra) (32) 26.12.86

DEFENDERS

4 Toby **ALDERWEIRELD** (Blg) (30) 02.03.89
24 Serge **AURIER** (IvC) (26) 24.12.92
33 Ben **DAVIES** (Wal) (26) 24.04.93
21 Juan **FOYTH** (Arg) (21) 12.01.98
3 Danny **ROSE** (29) 02.07.90
6 Davinson **SANCHEZ** (Col) (23) 12.06.96
5 Jan **VERTONGHEN** (Blg) (32) 24.04.87
16 Kyle **WALKER-PETERS** (22) 13.04.97

MIDFIELDERS

20 Dele **ALLI** (23) 11.04.96
15 Eric **DIER** (25) 15.01.94
23 Christian **ERIKSEN** (Den) (27) 14.02.92
11 Erik **LAMELA** (Arg) (27) 04.03.92
18 Giovani **LO CELSO** (Arg) (23) 09.04.96
27 Lucas **MOURA** I(Bra) (27) 13.08.92
28 Tanguy **NDOMBELE** (Fra) (22) 28.12.96
19 Ryan **SESSEGNON** (19) 18.05.00
17 Moussa **SISSOKO** (Fra) (30) 16.08.89
29 Oliver **SKIPP** (18) 16.09.00
12 Victor **WANYAMA** (Ken) (28) 25.06.91
8 Harry **WINKS** (23) 02.02.96

FORWARDS

10 Harry **KANE** (26) 28.07.93
7 **SON** Heung-min (SKo) (27) 08.07.92

MANAGER

Mauricio **POCHETTINO** (Arg) (47) 02.03.72

WATFORD

GOALKEEPERS

35 Daniel **BACHMANN** (Aut) (25) 09.07.94
30 Pontus **DAHLBERG** (Swe) (20) 21.01.99
26 Ben **FOSTER** (36) 03.04.83
1 Heurelho **GOMES** (Bra) (38) 15.02.81

DEFENDERS

15 Craig **CATHCART** (NI) (30) 06.02.89
4 Craig **DAWSON** (29) 06.05.90
21 Kiko **FEMENIA** (Spa) (28) 02.02.91
36 Dimitri **FOULQUIER** (Gdp) (26) 23.03.93
25 Jose **HOLEBAS** (Gre) (35) 27.06.84
2 Daryl **JANMAAT** (Hol) (30) 22.07.89
27 Christian **KABASELE** (Blg) (28) 24.02.91
6 Adrian **MARIAPPA** (Jam) (32) 03.10.86
11 Adam **MASINA** (Ita) (25) 02.01.94
5 Sebastian **PRODL** (Aut) (32) 21.06.87
- Marvin **ZEEGELAAR** (Hol) (28) 12.08.90

MIDFIELDERS

29 Etienne **CAPOUE** (Fra) (31) 11.07.88
14 Nathaniel **CHALOBAH** (24) 12.12.94
8 Tom **CLEVERLEY** (30) 12.08.89
24 Tom **DELE-BASHIRU** (Nga) (19) 17.09.99
16 Abdoulaye **DOUCOURE** (Fra) (26) 01.01.93
19 Will **HUGHES** (24) 17.04.95
37 Roberto **PEREYRA** (Arg) (28) 07.01.91
20 Domingos **QUINA** (Por) (19) 18.11.99

FORWARDS

9 Troy **DEENEY** (31) 29.06.88
7 Gerard **DEULOFEU** (Spa) (25) 13.03.94
18 Andre **GRAY** (28) 26.06.91
33 Stefano **OKAKA** (Ita) (30) 09.08.89
17 Adalberto **PENARANDA** (Ven) (22) 31.05.97
23 Ismaila **SARR** (Sen) (21) 25.02.98
- Filip **STUPAREVIC** (Ser) (19) 30.08.00
22 Isaac **SUCCESS** (Nga) (23) 07.01.96
10 Danny **WELBECK** (28) 26.11.90

MANAGER

Javi **GRACIA** (Spa) (49) 01.05.70

WEST HAM UTD

GOALKEEPERS

1 Lukasz **FABIANSKI** (Pol) (34) 18.04.85
25 David **MARTIN** (33) 22.01.86
13 **ROBERTO** (Spa) (33) 10.02.86

DEFENDERS

4 Fabian **BALBUENA** (Par) (28) 23.08.91
20 Goncalo **CARDOSO** (Por) (18) 21.10.00
3 Aaron **CRESSWELL** (29) 05.12.89
23 Issa **DIOP** (Fra) (22) 09.01.97
24 Ryan **FREDERICKS** (26) 10.10.92
26 Arthur **MASUAKU** (DRC) (25) 07.11.93
21 Angelo **OGBONNA** (Ita) (31) 23.05.88
2 Winston **REID** (NZ) (31) 03.07.88
5 Pablo **ZABALETA** (Arg) (34) 16.01.85

MIDFIELDERS

30 Michail **ANTONIO** (29) 28.03.90
8 **FELIPE ANDERSON** (Bra) (26) 15.04.93
18 Pablo **FORNALS** (23) 22.02.96
10 Manuel **LANZINI** (Arg) (26) 15.02.93
16 Mark **NOBLE** (32) 08.05.87
41 Declan **RICE** (20) 14.01.99
15 Carlos **SANCHEZ** (Col) (33) 06.02.86
11 Robert **SNODGRASS** (Sco) (31) 07.09.87
19 Jack **WILSHERE** (27) 01.01.92

FORWARDS

27 Albian **AJETI** (Swi) (22) 26.02.97
9 Javier **HERNANDEZ** (Mex) (31) 01.06.88
22 Sebastien **HALLER** (Fra) (25) 22.06.94
32 Xande **SILVA** (Por) (22) 16.03.97
7 Andriy **YARMOLENKO** (Ukr) (29) 23.10.89

MANAGER

Manuel **PELLEGRINI** (Chl) (65) 16.09.53

WOLVES

GOALKEEPERS

11 Rui **PATRICIO** (Por) (31) 15.02.88
21 John **RUDDY** (32) 24.10.86

DEFENDERS

5 Ryan **BENNETT** (29) 06.03.90
15 Willy **BOLY** (Fra) (28) 03.02.91
16 Conor **COADY** (26) 25.02.93
2 Matt **DOHERTY** (Rol) (27) 06.01.92
19 **JONNY** (Spa) (25) 03.03.94
49 Max **KILMAN** (22) 23.05.97
23 Dion **SANDERSON** (19) 15.12.99
4 Jesus **VALLEJO** (Spa) (22) 05.01.97
29 Ruben **VINAGRE** (Por) (20) 09.04.99

MIDFIELDERS

32 Leander **DENDONCKER** (Blg) (24) 15.04.95
17 Morgan **GIBBS-WHITE** (19) 27.01.00
6 Bruno **JORDAO** (Por) (20) 12.10.98
28 Joao **MOUTINHO** (Por) (32) 08.09.86
7 Pedro **NETO** (Por) (19) 09.03.00
8 Ruben **NEVES** (Por) (22) 13.03.97
26 Taylor **PERRY** (18) 15.07.01
27 Romain **SAISS** (Mor) (29) 26.03.90

FORWARDS

10 Patrick **CUTRONE** (Ita) (21) 03.01.98
9 Raul **JIMENEZ** (Mex) (28) 05.05.91
18 Diogo **JOTA** (Por) (22) 04.12.96
37 Adama **TRAORE** (Spa) (23) 25.01.96

MANAGER

Nuno Espirito **SANTO** (Por) (45) 25.01.74

(ages as of 06.09.19)

Left wing...St Pauli fans are famous for their political views

HAMBURG v ST PAULI

Two clubs representing the two extremes of Germany's second-biggest city

Once the home of two-time Ballon d'Or winner and England captain Kevin Keegan, the 1983 European Cup winners and six-times national champions Hamburg are one of German football's biggest and most successful club sides of all time.

They play in a state-of-the-art, 57,000-capacity stadium in the western quarter of the city and as recently as 2014 were rated one of the world's top 20 most valuable clubs by Forbes.

Yet in the heart of Germany's second-biggest city there is another club – and its proud boast is that it is everything HSV is not.

Situated in an area that also houses the infamous red-light Reeperbahn district, St Pauli are defiantly working class, with their supporters' famed for their anti-racist, anti-homophobic and left-wing views. The nearest they have ever come to on-field success has been the odd season in the top flight, the last of which, in 2010, ended after just one season as they finished bottom of the Bundesliga.

With HSV being the only team to have played in every Bundesliga season since its inception in 1963, fixtures between the two sides were relatively rare...until Hamburg's shock relegation in 2018 put an end to that impressive record.

So, with the city's two teams now in the same division, the intense local rivalry once again becomes football based, rather than a matter of politics and ideology.

The latest instalment of this most extreme of derbies will be played at St Pauli's Millerntor-Stadion on September 16. WS

Second tier..Hamburg (in white) and St Pauli meet again

CLASSIC ENCOUNTERS

1924 Oct 19
Hamburg are victorious in the first-ever game between the two sides, winning 3-1 on route to claiming the Northern German championship.

1930 Oct 19
At the eighth time of asking, St Pauli finally manage a first derby win, triumphing 1-0.

1977 Sep 3
In the first-ever Bundesliga meeting, St Pauli win 2-0.

2019 Mar 10
In the 93rd and most recent clash, Hamburg win 4-0 to increase their lead to 59-19 in head-to-head results.

ON BOTH SIDES

WILLI REIMANN
● 1974-81; (coach) 1987-90
● (coach) 1986-87, 1999-2000

HOLGER HIERONYMUS
● 1978-79
● 1979-84;
(caretaker coach) 2001

CHRISTIAN RAHN
● 1996-2002
● 2002-05

ROUWEN HENNINGS
● 2001-08
● 2008-12

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